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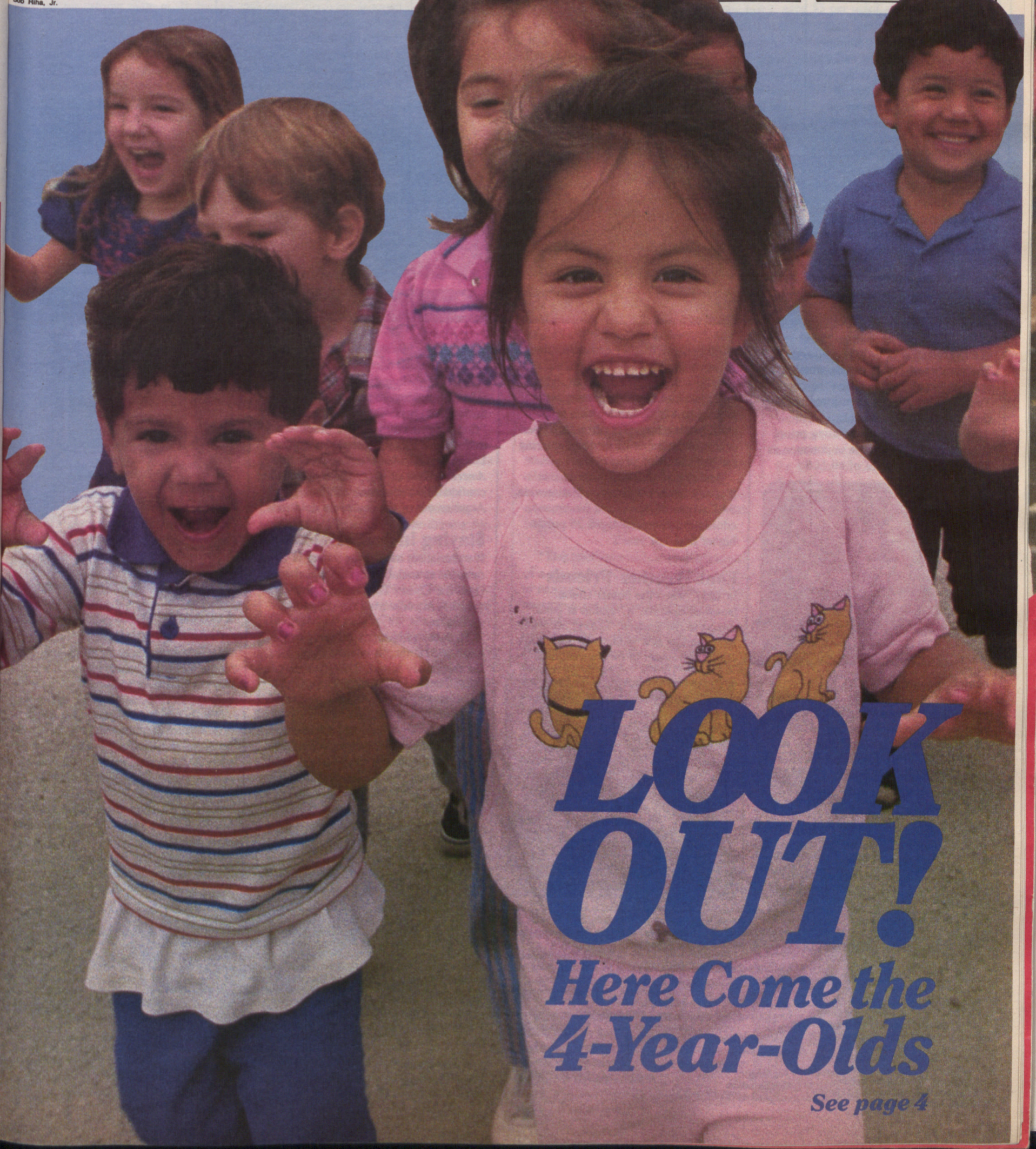
NEA Today

WASHINGTON, D.C. DECEMBER 1987

A NEWSPAPER FOR MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL

VOL. 6, NO. 5

Bob Riha, Jr.



LOOK OUT!

Here Come the 4-Year-Olds

See page 4

PRESIDENT'S VIEWPOINT

Toward Self-Governance

Last month, as you may have noticed, the newspapers were peppered with articles about the launching of America's first National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

The new national board is now indeed a functioning reality—after several years of discussion. I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to be part of that discussion, first as a member of the Carnegie Forum panel that originally proposed the national board in 1985, then as a member of the committee that designed the new national board's governance structure.

This structure is now in place. And as a member of the 63-person board of directors, I've been receiving a great many questions about what the national board will mean for the teaching profession.

Teachers and the general public, too, are curious about the new board. Who will the board certify? Beginning teachers only? Current teachers? How will the board assess candidates for certification? What will certificates actually mean for those who receive them?

All good questions—and all questions still awaiting answers. The board will be debating questions like these in the months and even years ahead, and I feel good about that.

I feel good because more than half the 63 members of the board of directors are classroom teachers—men and women who can bring to the national board's deliberations the insight and realism that come from service on the front lines of education.

That teachers make up the majority of the directors of the National Board is no accident. The NEA members who served on the planning committee worked hard and long to ensure teachers a

NEA President
Mary Hatwood Futrell

strong voice in the board's decision-making process.

We explained to the other civic, community, and business leaders who served on the planning committee that we sought a mechanism that would make possible real accountability to the public we serve and the children we cherish. And we emphasized that self-governance is the hallmark of professionalism.

As sociologist Paul Starr noted in his Pulitzer Prize-winning study, *The Societal Transformation of American Medicine*, "A profession differs from other occupations by its ability to set its own rules and regulations."

Medicine, Starr adds, became a profession worthy of respect only when it established firm boundaries between qualified and unqualified practitioners. Teaching needs equally distinct and rigorously enforced boundaries.

But let's be clear on one point. The creation of a national standards board does not by itself make self-governance a reality.

Self-governance—if confined to the national level—is no more than tokenism. The new National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, remember, is an independent, nongovernmental body. It will have no legal standing.

The legal decisions about who is—*and* who is not—eligible to teach will continue to be made at the state level. This fact makes the creation of state-level standards boards composed of teacher majorities imperative. Only through a coordinated system of state boards, working in concert with a national board, will we achieve the higher standards to which our profession—and the nation—aspire.

With self-governance, we can work toward meaningful standards. Tough standards. Standards that rest on the highest expectations and well defined research. Standards that are faithful to the highest ideals of excellence. Standards that are enforceable.

If, in other words, we are to end the provisional certification of teachers, if we are to end the misassignment of teachers, if we are to ensure a competent teacher in every classroom, then educators must govern the standards for entry into the profession.

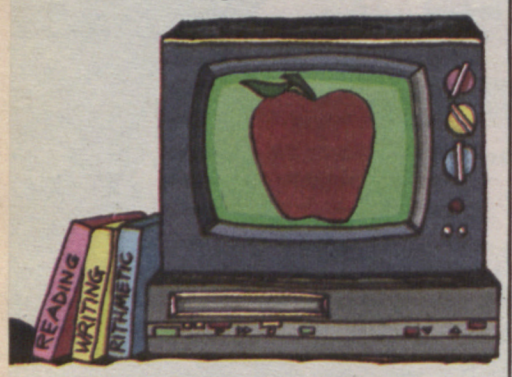
High standards are what our Association seeks. High standards are what professional standards boards—at the state and national levels—can help us ensure. □

TRENDS

Religious Revival

The number of young people worshiping at the video altar is again on the rise. The congregation has been lured back by the video cassette recorder.

Soaring sales and plummeting prices are making VCRs almost as common as TVs. Some 39 percent of all U.S.



households now own a VCR.

But before you despair of this video-reverent generation, be advised that a new survey by Michigan State University researchers has found that 14- and 15-year-olds in VCR-owning families report reading more books, magazines, and newspapers than their non-VCR-owning peers.

The Greening Of a Profession

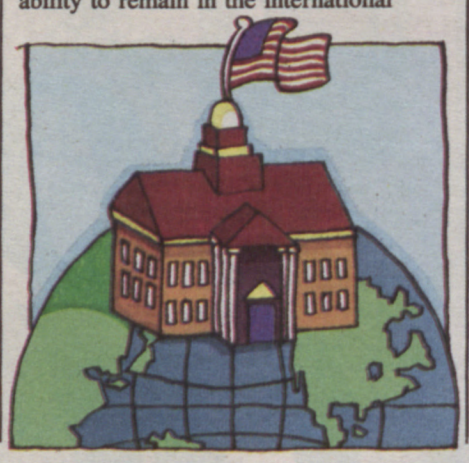
In states that have established higher starting salaries for beginning teachers, enrollments in teacher education classes are again swelling.

In New Jersey, for example, where the legislature upped beginning teacher salaries to $18,500, education schools are reporting increases of up to 30 percent in the number of students entering teacher education programs.

And it's not just the quantity that's pleasing teacher educators. Nationwide, SAT scores of this year's freshman education majors averaged 25 points higher than last year's.

Foul-Weather Friends

In 1957, when the Soviet Union launched Sputnik, a "nation at panic" turned to the schools. Today, 30 years later, amidst new panic over America's ability to remain in the international marketplace, our schools are again perceived as rescue agents.



An overwhelming majority of Americans—81 percent—believe that only through better education will the country "find a way to turn around productivity over the long haul," concludes pollster Louis Harris in his latest book, *Inside America.* Two of every three citizens are confident that education can catapult America out of the economic doldrums.

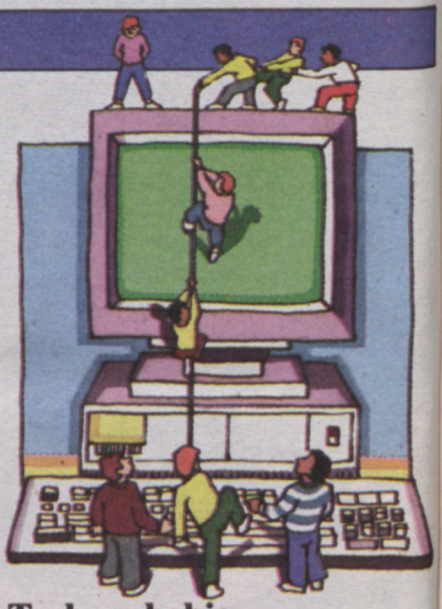
$taying in $chool

If materialism among the young is as rampant as social analysts say, new data from the Census Bureau may prove valuable in countering the dropout syndrome.

High school graduation brings an extra $352 a month in earning power, the new study found. And students who complete college earn $672 a month more on average than those who left college before attaining a degree.

Holders of professional degrees (doctors and lawyers) earn an average of $3,871 a month. Doctoral degree holders come next, at $3,265 a month, followed by those holding master's degrees ($2,288), bachelor's degrees ($1,841), associate degrees ($1,346), and graduates of vocational training programs ($1,219).

High school graduates average $1,045 a month; high school dropouts...$693.



Technophobia... or Acrophobia?

What's stopping schools from jumping on the technology bandwagon in a big way? A hesitancy to innovate, coupled with inadequate research, say advocates.

These analysts believe new technologies—from electronic media that could broaden course offerings in small districts to "distance learning" via audio links—could radically advance the instructional process.

Educators have "crossed the first foothill," observes James A. Mecklenburger, director of the National School Boards Association's Institute for the Transfer of Technology to Education. Now, he says, it's time "to climb the mountain." □

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EDUCATION REFORM

Putting Teachers Firmly in Charge

The Mastery in Learning Project includes 27 elementary, middle, junior, and senior high schools that represent a cross-section of American public schools. NEA launched MILP in 1985 to help teachers focus on the most important issues in learning and to provide teachers with the resources essential to finding solutions that will work in their schools.

The Coalition of Essential Schools is a partnership between Brown University and 50 public and private high schools. The partnership grew out of Theodore Sizer's book, *Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School*. Started in 1984, CES works to strengthen student learning by reforming school priorities and simplifying school structures.

The National Network for Educational Renewal consists of partnerships between 115 school districts and 17 universities in 14 states. Based on John Goodlad's book, *A Place Called School: Prospects for the Future*, the Network was begun in 1986 to link local efforts at school improvement with the upgrading of teacher training.

The three school reform networks brought together at an NEA symposium in October are based on common assumptions: that successful education reform begins at the school building level, that those responsible for change—teachers, students, parents, and site administrators—must have a major role in determining which changes are best suited to their schools, and that comprehensive changes are necessary in the environments of schools.

Snow was threatening and there was a definite nip in the Minnesota air. Sue Norman doesn't own a pair of closed shoes. But the teacher from Hillside Junior High School in southern California had no time to worry about cold feet.

She had some very good news—with impressive numbers to back it up—to share with the other 272 participants at the NEA-sponsored Symposium on School-Based Reform in early October. After only two years in NEA's Mastery in Learning Project, Hillside students had posted dramatic increases in the state-mandated California Assessment Project (CAP).

If anyone needed concrete evidence that faculty make effective decisions about how to restructure their schools to enhance student learning, the Hillside teachers were ready to provide it.

Hillside has traditionally been the lowest scoring school in its district. In the CAP tests administered last April, Hillside students moved to first place in math, tied for first in reading, moved to second in science and written expression and fourth in history and social science.

"We don't think standardized tests are the best measure of student achievement," said Norman. "But they are one measure. We're proud of our students—and of the curriculum changes we've made at Hillside."

NEA symposium brings together three national school networks that make teachers the driving force for reform.

The Symposium brought together—for the first time—educators from the nation's three major networks of schools working on locally generated, teacher-driven education reform: NEA's Mastery in Learning Project (MILP), directed by Robert McClure; the Coalition of Essential Schools, launched by Theodore Sizer; and the National Network for Educational Renewal, led by John Goodlad. (*Descriptions of the three networks appear above.*)

"We firmly believe that any serious effort to improve education must be led by educators," explains McClure, a longtime NEA Instruction and Professional Development staff member who as MILP head was the driving force behind the gathering.

"The symposium was designed to enable school faculties to leave their isolation," says McClure. "We brought together the teachers who are doing the research and making the changes. We provided them with a forum to talk to each other and exchange ideas."

"Challenge the regularities," urged Theodore Sizer in his keynote address, setting the tone for the four days of discussion. He argued that nothing should be considered sacrosanct—including those basics, like division of the school day into periods and subject matter areas, that are no longer questioned.

And nothing *was* sacrosanct. The participants attended workshops on topics such as student and teacher scheduling, using educational research, and creating a professional climate in schools. They met in work groups with people from other schools to discuss—and argue about—what they're doing.

"The most incredible thing about the Mastery Project and this conference," said Sue Walters, a teacher at Wells (Maine) Junior High, "is that faculties—not district administrators—are analyzing the research and making decisions about how best to organize our schools."

"For the first time in all my years attending education conferences," said Jimmy Nations, a teacher at The Westwood School in Dalton, Ga., "the experts at the front of the room are teachers speaking about their work. For once it's not teachers listening to outside 'experts' tell us about our work."

"This conference is a reaffirmation of a major thrust in this country not only to empower teachers, but for educational constituencies and policy makers to work together to improve our nation's schools," NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell told the teachers. "True education reform will be a success only if *all* segments of our society begin to work together to improve the schools."

Through this conference, said Futrell, "we have the opportunity to learn from each other, to share our findings with our communities, and to continue to be educational pathfinders and blaze new trails for America's schools."

The educators at the NEA-sponsored symposium didn't come away with prescriptions for improving their schools. That was never the purpose of this meeting rooted in the belief that real reform must be generated as well as implemented by each school faculty.

But the educators did leave with ideas, with resources—and with new challenges.

"I'm exhausted," said Pat Campbell, co-chair of the MILP Steering Committee at Willow Creek Junior High School in Rochester, Minn. "I'm also re-energized. Because this conference has reminded me, and all of us, how important we are, how important our work is—and how important our students are to our nation's future."

—Heidi Steffens

Larry Salzman

Wildwood (Fla.) Middle School counselor Susan Jones (left) and math teacher Thelma Colden discuss student grouping—one of the focuses of their school's Mastery project—during a work group meeting at the Minneapolis symposium.

News Beat

● Less than 2 percent of the $650 billion spent on education in the United States over the past five years went to support **education reform**, reports a recently released New York University study, "The Fiscal Impact of Education Reform." Analyzing data from 44 states, researchers found that between 1983 and 1987, teacher salary increases averaged a mere $127 per year. Spending on curriculum and testing improvements averaged $3 per pupil annually, and programs to increase graduation standards received no more than $1 per pupil per year. The study concluded, "This amounts to no commitment for education reform in America."

● Low tax rates were once the prime consideration of companies looking for **new business locations**. Today the search is for communities with superior systems of education. The reason? According to corporate consultants interviewed by the *Christian Science Monitor*, employers want well-educated workers who can keep up with technological innovations.

● For the second time, the Project on Equal Education Rights (PEER) has conferred one of its annual "Silver Snail" awards for "outstanding nonperformance in promoting sex equity" on **U.S. Education Secretary William Bennett**. PEER, a project of the National Organization for Women, cited Bennett for excluding pregnant teens from single parent and homemaker programs funded under the Perkins Vocational Education Act. Bennett is the only person ever to "win" the award twice.

● Expert witnesses told a Senate subcommittee this fall that the schools are failing to serve 60 percent of America's 2.5 million **gifted and talented** elementary and secondary school students. "We can't afford to have our brightest, most talented children get bored with the school system," concluded Sen. Bill Bradley (D-N.J.), sponsor of an NEA-backed bill to authorize more federal funds for identifying and serving gifted and talented children. □

WELL PUT!

Bob Daemmrich/UNIPHOTO

"It's time to replace the three R's with the three C's: calculate, compute, communicate in the language of technology. And we must do this in the areas where the population is poorest."

—San Antonio Mayor Henry Cisneros, greeting NEA National Conference on "Teaching in America Today and Tomorrow: Meeting the Challenges of Our Multicultural Society," Oct. 23, 1987.

COVER STORY

Joe Di Dio

Joe Di Dio

Bob Riha, Jr.

This page, clockwise from upper left: Arlington, Va., teacher Daena Kluegel guides a three-year-old through a conceptual skill exercise; another Arlington preschooler has time for a special printing project; Pomona, Calif., early childhood teacher Betty Shepphard attends to one of her youngest charges; Pomona kids mug for the camera.

Bob Riha, Jr.

Facing page, clockwise from top left: A budding Pomona artist is on the way to completing another project; Allentown, Pa., teacher Sue McNeil leads her Project HAPPY proteges through the halls of South Mountain Middle School; a daring Pomona youngster scales new heights; two Project HAPPY students fit different shaped pieces into a box to develop motor skills and coordination.

Here Come the

...and sometimes the 3-year-olds and children even younger, as more and more of America's public schools begin to offer early childhood education programs.

At South Mountain Middle School in Allentown, Pa., a four-year-old practices making the 'K' sound.

In a classroom building adjacent to the Haddon Avenue Elementary School in Los Angeles, Calif., two- and three-year-olds listen intently as their teacher explains personal hygiene.

At Glebe Elementary School in Arlington, Va., three-, four-, and five-year-olds are involved in "practical life" Montessori activities.

Scenes like these are not yet commonplace, but neither are they rare, as more and more school districts respond to changing public needs by creating new early childhood education programs—and expanding those already in place.

Some 3,000 of the nation's 15,000 school districts now reportedly sponsor early childhood programs. The goals of these programs vary. Some aim only to provide quality child care. Others deal with youngsters' learning problems early on. Still others focus on teaching academic readiness.

The teachers involved are almost all certificated, with degrees in early childhood education, special education, and elementary education.

NEA has long supported early childhood education that gives children effective preparation for kindergarten—as long as trained, certified teachers and aides lead the youngsters. *Early Childhood Education and Kindergarten*, an NEA resolution adopted by vote of the Representative Assembly in 1975 and last revised in 1986, urges federal legislation to help promote and fund these efforts.

Currently, the NEA Executive Committee is preparing a report for the 1988 Representative Assembly on the feasibility of establishing neighborhood day care as an adjunct to public education.

Support for early childhood programs run by the public schools is growing on all fronts. A recent study sponsored by the Committee for Economic Development—a nonprofit organization whose trustees are mostly business executives—called for more federal dollars for "proven programs" such as Head Start and remedial reading and math programs. The study clearly demonstrated the value of these programs for disadvantaged youngsters.

In Pomona, Calif., 600 infants to 13-year-olds are enrolled in eight children's centers run by the unified school district. They attend approved hours between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. each weekday because their parents work or are training for jobs, or because social workers have identified these kids as being at risk for physical abuse if they stay home.

Association member Bill Ewing, Pomona's administrator of child development programs, notes that the centers are open to any child, but because fees are on a sliding scale, the centers are most advantageous to lower-income families.

Pomona's program is more than a babysitting service. With youngsters through age 4, the program seeks to advance development through "learning experiences." The curriculum—developed by High/Scope, a nonprofit educational research foundation headquartered in Ypsilanti, Mich.—allows children to choose their own daily activities within predetermined guidelines.

The Pomona program is so popular that it has a waiting list of almost 1,000. The ratio of children to adults is set by state law at 4 to 1 for infants and 8 to 1 for children up to age 4. Those adults must include one certified teacher for every 24 youngsters beyond infancy.

All but two of the Pomona centers are located on elementary school grounds. One serves infants and toddlers whose parents are still public school students themselves and works with the young parents to teach them proper child care. Another accepts mildly ill children who have a doctor's approval—a real boon for working parents.

Two other centers—one open seven days a week from 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., the other open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to midnight—provide a safe place for parents to leave their children when they seriously need to get away for a few hours. Children in all the centers are checked regularly by school nurse practitioners.

Pomona's children's center program started in 1969, but it can trace its roots back to 1943 when Congress passed the Lanham Act, establishing federally funded child care for mothers working in defense industries. When California implemented the Lanham Act, it placed the administration of a statewide child care program under the state department of education.

The Los Angeles unified school district sponsors a program similar to Pomona's, in operation since the 1940s.

Martha Bayer is chair of the Children's Center Committee of United Teachers-Los Angeles. Bayer, who teaches at the Haddon Avenue Center, attended the program herself as a child.

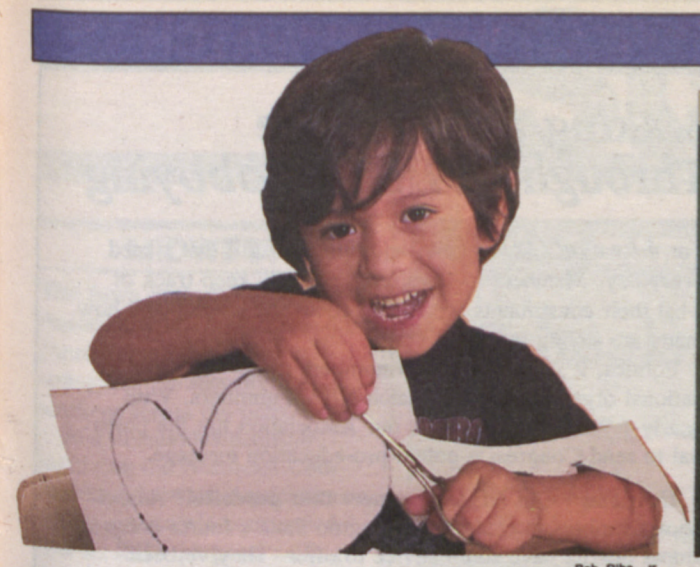
"I'm here because I believe in its benefits," she says.

Los Angeles' 90 children's centers each serve an average of 130 youngsters aged 2 to 12, from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. every weekday. School-age children attend before and after regular classes.

"Each center has a waiting list of about 200," says Bayer. "We give preference to children who are non-English-proficient, handicapped, or recommended by protective services."

Los Angeles has its own curriculum—Foundations for Learning—that develops each child's language skills and mathematical concepts through interdisciplinary techniques like puzzles, manipu-

COVER STORY



Bob Riha, Jr.

Bobby Roe

Bobby Roe

Bob Riha, Jr.

How Does Your Program Rate?

Guidelines established by the National Black Child Development Institute, Inc., provide a good checklist against which to measure any public school–based early childhood program.

- ► Does the program include effective parent education?
- ► Are parents involved in decisions about curriculum and policy?
- ► Do teachers have specific training in early childhood education? If not, is there inservice training, provided weekly by qualified staff?
- ► Is there a mechanism for regular external review by community members and early childhood experts?
- ► Does the teaching staff come from the community served?
- ► Are the program's activities sensitive to the children's cultural backrounds and appropriate to their age and level of development?
- ► Does the program observe the same health and safety standards that apply to independent child care programs?
- ► Does the program participate in federal and state programs that guarantee adequate nutrition to children?
- ► Must children entering the program have access to appropriate health care?
- ► In assessing children and planning programs, do administrators go beyond reliance on standardized testing? □

4-Year-Olds!

latives, and tape recordings. The youngsters are checked periodically by a nurse, a dentist, and an audiometrist.

Since the Pomona and Los Angeles programs exist primarily to provide child care, can they be considered education? David Elkind, president of the National Association for the Education of Young Children and a Tufts University professor, asserts that *all* levels of education contain some degree of child care.

"The issue is not education vs. child care but rather the proportion of the two components provided at any particular level of schooling," Elkind notes. Teachers of young children help them "acquire the fundamental concepts of space, time, number, causality, relations, and nature-concepts that form the essential data base for all later learning." And this acquisition goes hand-in-hand with learning pre-academic language and social skills, such as paying attention and taking turns, that are presupposed by formal education.

Some 23 states now have legislation pending to provide school for four-year-olds, adds Elkind—a sure sign of the growing recognition that early childhood education should become a legitimate part of public education.

In Allentown, Pa., mildly handicapped three- to five-year-olds attend Project HAPPY (an acronym for Helping Achieve Potential of Preschool Youngsters) classes for two-and-a-half hours each day, four days a week. The children have been identified as likely candidates for future special education services. Most of them come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds or from families with cultural or linguistic differences.

Like most early childhood efforts, five-year-old Project HAPPY works hard to involve parents—and to make them proud of their children's classroom experiences.

"Many of the parents feel insecure—even embarrassed—by what they perceive as their own or their children's inadequacies," explains Association member Sue McNeil, a Project HAPPY teacher since 1984 and one of the program's developers. "When they feel motivated by their children's successes, we know we're making real progress."

Charlene Bembridge, whose three-year-old son Kenyatta Carter entered the program in September, notes the progress he's made in just a few months.

"Kenyatta is very active," Bembridge explains, "but the combination of structured days and individual attention he receives from Project Happy has changed his attitude. He now tries very hard to behave better."

Most of McNeil's students lack proper motor coordination or language proficiency. On a typical day, some children cut out sketches (being careful to follow the heavy lines drawn to guide them), others practice following directions in sequence, and still others learn social behaviors like taking turns and responding in sentences to a question.

McNeil keeps track of her students when they go on to elementary school. "When they're successful there, it means Project HAPPY is successful," she explains.

The program's benefits aren't limited to participants and their families. Child development students at the middle school that houses Project HAPPY work with the younger students to gain first-hand knowledge of what makes them thrive and learn.

In Arlington, Va., a 16-year-old public Montessori program enrolls some 320 three- to five-year-olds, giving preference to non-English-speaking, minority, and low-income youngsters. The 16 three-hour daily classes are offered in four different elementary schools. Each class averages 20 students. Parents of three- and four-year-olds pay a sliding tuition fee, while five-year-olds attend the program instead of traditional kindergarten. Children stay with a single teacher until they enter first grade.

"Because of this stability, we have greater flexibility in meeting a child's individual needs," explains Daena Kluegel, a Montessori teacher at Arlington's Glebe Elementary School. "We can really get to know the needs of each child—and let new children learn from those already in the program."

The Montessori teaching method, named for the Italian physician who developed it early in this century, emphasizes individual learning. Each child concentrates on a particular skill when he or she is most ready. The teacher acts mainly as a facilitator, giving the children hands-on materials—like sandpaper letters and metal geometric shapes—to help them learn.

Arlington mother Katherine Carey credits the program with enhancing the lives of her four children—some learning disabled and others gifted.

"The method reinforced their strengths at an early age," she explains. "It recognizes a child as an individual and teaches socialization skills at the same time."

Early childhood education programs are obviously not only here to stay, but to grow and multiply. As they spread, NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell cautions, educators must be careful not to overlook quality.

"Early childhood professionals and teachers will have to unite and insist that these programs be staffed by professionals fully trained and prepared to cope with the special needs of the very young," Futrell noted in a recent article for *American Psychologist*, a journal of the American Psychological Association. Futrell is an enthusiastic supporter of early childhood enrichment programs.

"We should be doing with four-year-olds precisely what we should be doing with *all* students," she advises. "We should base instruction not on the chronological age of the student, but on an assessment of each student's stage of development. Our students should not be judged by their birth certificates.

"Chronology is not destiny," Futrell concludes. "The calendar need not be a tyrant. Not in our lives. Not in our children's lives."

—Diane Dismuke

HUMAN RIGHTS

Flip Schulke/Black Star

"I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality and freedom for their spirits. I believe that what self-centered men have torn down, other-centered men can build up."

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

On His Birthday

Striving To Build a Lasting King Legacy

Monday, Jan. 18, is the second national holiday honoring the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. But this year, instead of parties and parades, the Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday Commission is looking for a different kind of action.

This year, Commission members are starting a tradition they hope will become more popular than bargain-hunting at holiday sales and more meaningful than ceremonies or celebrations. They're asking "people to work with people to help people in the name of Martin Luther King, Jr."

The Commission is asking those who want to mark the holiday to establish Martin Luther King, Jr. Heritage Action Projects. The goal, according to Commission Deputy Executive Director Allen Jackson, is to "institutionalize a holiday that's different—a day when people reflect on the ideals Martin Luther King, Jr., lived by. We want Americans to look at this holiday as an opportunity—an excuse—to help somebody."

Guidelines for establishing Martin Luther King, Jr., Heritage Action Projects are purposely broad. The Commission wants each sponsoring group to feel free to make its own unique contribution.

The Commission suggests that each project—

- ► Seek to alleviate a social ill, such as violence, racism, substance abuse, war, poverty, teen pregnancy, school dropouts, homelessness, hunger, or illiteracy.
- ► Be conducted by a class or school, an association, a civic group, or a social club in collaboration with other groups.
- ► Involve the donation of time and talents as well as money.
- ► Touch the lives of those in need, including at-risk children, disabled people, persons suffering from injustice, or victims of discrimination.
- ► Result in change consistent with the goals of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Projects may be designed to include the 1988 and 1989 King holidays, although they should be completed no later than the 1989 holiday. The Commission will be keeping track of Heritage Action Projects, so organizations are asked to send progress reports by March 1988 to the address in the box below.

"There's no better way to remember Dr. King's life than to continue his work," points out NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell, who's a member of the Commission. "I encourage local Associations to establish projects in their communities, and I strongly urge teachers to help students develop their own projects.

"We can celebrate this holiday with our students by teaching Dr. King's values—equality, justice, peace, and commitment," adds Futrell. "And we can teach best by example."

—Stefanie Weiss, NEA Human and Civil Rights

For more information on establishing a Heritage Action Project in your community or school, write to the Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday Commission, 451 Seventh St., S.W., Washington, DC 20410, or call 202/755-1005.

'Say That I Tried To Love and Serve Humanity...'

A few months before his untimely death in 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr., spoke about how he would like to be remembered:

"Every now and then I guess we all think realistically about that day when we will be victimized with what is life's final common denominator—that something we call death. We all think about it. And every now and then I think about my own death, and I think about my own funeral. And I don't think of it in a morbid sense. Every now and then I ask myself, 'What is it that I would want said?' And I leave the word to you this morning.

"If any of you are around when I have to meet my day, I don't want a long funeral. And if you get somebody to deliver the eulogy, tell them not to talk too long. Every now and then I wonder what I want them to say. Tell them not to mention that I have a Nobel Peace Prize, that isn't important. Tell them not to mention that I have three or four hundred other awards, that's not important. Tell them not to mention where I went to school.

"I'd like somebody to mention that day, that Martin Luther King, Jr., tried to give his life serving others. I'd like for somebody to say that day, that Martin Luther King, Jr., tried to love somebody. I want you to say that day, that I tried to be right on the war question. I want you to be able to say that day, that I did try to feed the hungry. And I want you to be able to say that day, that I did try, in my life, to clothe those who were naked. I want you to say, on that day, that I did try, in my life, to visit those who were in prison. I want you to say that I tried to love and serve humanity.

"Yes, if you want to say that I was a drum major, say that I was a drum major for justice: say that I was a drum major for peace; I was a drum major for righteousness. And all of the other shallow things will not matter. I won't have any money to leave behind. I won't have the fine and luxurious things of life to leave behind. But I just want to leave a committed life behind."

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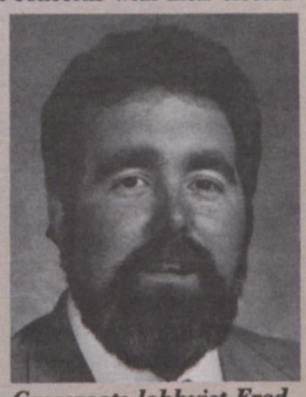
WASHINGTON WATCH

Making a Difference Through At-Home Lobbying

For the nation's lawmakers, addition is a skill that's used every day. Members of Congress regularly keep track of what their constituents are saying about the issues—and how many are saying it.

Politics, it's been said, is a numbers game—and few national organizations can match NEA's numbers. With nearly 1.9 million members, our Association has the potential to send Congress a potent pro-education message.

How can we in NEA best meet that potential? Association members in central Washington State's fourth congressional district have some advice to offer. They've been regularly raising their education concerns with their elected representative, GOP Congressman Sid Morrison.



Grassroots lobbyist Fred Bray of Prosser, Wash.

One of the Association members who's worked hard to create a system for sharing information with Rep. Morrison is Fred Bray, a fourth grade teacher at Prosser Heights Elementary in Prosser.

"With Rep. Morrison's blessing," Bray explains, "we set up a group of leaders who represent our UniServ Council and the different Association locals and political action committees in our congressional district. This group acts as a sounding board on education issues for Congressman Morrison. He meets with us here in the district—sometimes at our request, sometimes at his—to supplement the information he gets from NEA lobbying staff in Washington, D.C."

The system has worked so well, Bray explains, that he and his colleagues are now working on a way to broaden the exchange.

"We're expanding it to include teachers in the federally aided programs like Chapter 1, migrant education, and bilingual education," says Bray. "This way we're sure we have people on hand to relate to Rep. Morrison how these programs are working at the school building level."

The meetings with Rep. Morrison have paid off in a greatly improved voting record on education issues. In the 97th Congress (1981-82), Rep. Morrison voted "right" on only 27 percent of those issues. In the next Congress, he voted "right" 64 percent of the time, and in the last Congress, 88 percent of the time. Rep. Morrison was on the NEA side on every recent vote associated with the fiscal 1988 education appropriations bill.

"Part of that change was the input of NEA members," says Bray. "Rep. Morrison saw that education was the key to other issues he's concerned about, like welfare reform and economic recovery. He understands that there is a definite federal role in education."

The positive relationship between Association members and Rep. Morrison has had other benefits. After Bray and others mentioned the difficulty they were having reaching their state legislators, Rep. Morrison offered to set up meetings in his district office.

Fred Bray is a member of the NEA Congressional Contact Team, the Association's grassroots lobbying effort. There are NEA members who volunteer to serve as Congressional Contact Team activists in every congressional district across the country. These roughly 1,300 Congressional Contact Team members work hard to share legislative information with their Association colleagues—and then encourage their colleagues to contact their representatives in Congress.

The techniques the Contact Team members use to keep colleagues abreast of congressional activities vary widely. Some prepare *articles* that can be printed in local Association publications. Others produce *flyers*, often adapted from NEA-provided materials, or post materials on *bulletin boards* in faculty lounges or worksites. Still others speak at *Association meetings* at the local or regional level, or host *get-togethers of Association members* to provide an opportunity to deal directly with those who are interested in specific federal education programs.

NEA is widely respected for its ability to make a difference in Congress. That ability to make a difference begins with at-home lobbying.

—Michael Pons, NEA Government Relations

State Side

MIDWEST

The Iowa State Education Association has scored a major court victory that will strengthen job security for teachers across the state.

In a unanimous decision involving the Northeast Community Education Association, the state supreme court ruled that an ISEA proposal calling for remediation of employees who receive unsatisfactory evaluations is a mandatory subject for bargaining.

The district had argued that remediation was separate from evaluation and not a mandatory bargaining topic. But the court held that if remediation were not a subject of bargaining, public employers couldn't insist on proposals linking training, transfers, and staff reductions to employee performance.

"This important win brings us one step closer in our efforts to professionalize teaching," says ISEA President Ken Tilp. "We can now insist that school districts bargain not only evaluation criteria but also ways to help teachers improve their performance."

NORTHEAST

Allowing parents tax deductions to cover the cost of private and parochial school tuition and textbooks would violate the Massachusetts constitution, the state supreme judicial court ruled in October.

A bill to allow such deductions had been introduced in the state senate, modeled after a Minnesota law that was judged constitutional. The legislation would have allowed tax deductions of $1,000 to $1,500 to parents with children in private, parochial, or public schools. (For public school parents, the deduction would have been for the cost of remedial instruction or other special programs outside the regular curriculum.)

The Massachusetts Teachers Association had filed a brief opposing the bill. Hailing the ruling, MTA President Nancy Finkelstein says, "Massachusetts voters have defeated two successive referenda questions on public aid to private schools. Now the courts have also rejected this concept. We hope we've seen the last of this issue in Massachusetts."

PACIFIC

'Don't Crowd My Kids' is the motto. Class size is the message. And California Teachers Association members are working hard to get their concern across.

"We're telling the voters that it's a disservice to the youth of California—and a disgrace to the people of California—that our schools have the most crowded classes in the nation," says CTA President Ed Foglia.

This fall CTA ran a massive advertising campaign that included television spots on stations throughout the state and ads in 20 major newspapers.

The message was clear. As one CTA ad put it: "In the most affluent state in the nation, why are we leaving our kids in last place?"

"Our ultimate purpose is to reorder the priorities of the state," explains Foglia. "Our campaign is designed to inform the public about education, so that voters will put pressure on politicians to give adequate funding to our schools, colleges, and universities."

The second part of this major CTA effort is already under way as CTA members collect signatures for two ballot initiatives that would allow *additional* spending for education. This is a tall order in California—the state that since the 1978 passage of Proposition 13 has been the pioneer of spending *limitations*. But it's a challenge CTA members feel is essential—for their students and their state.

MID-ATLANTIC

The 95,000-member Ohio Education Association, in partnership with Ashland Oil, Inc., is conducting a massive public relations campaign for education. Ashland Oil is spending 100 percent of its Ohio advertising budget for the project, which includes pro-teacher advertising and $50,000 in fellowships, grants, and cash awards to OEA members for superior teaching.

Ashland Oil proposed the high-visibility campaign because the corporation—like the Association—understands the need to increase public understanding of the importance of education and teaching.

OEA has developed posters, brochures, and a video to promote the campaign, which will run through May 1988.

In addition to the Ashland project, the Association has budgeted $300,000 for its own 1987-88 media campaign and is in the process of setting up round-table discussions with key Ohio business leaders.

"Our programs to expand visibility and cooperation with the business community are one key to dealing successfully with the important issues of member compensation and improved funding for education," explains OEA President Don Wilson.

WEST

Local Associations in Texas now have the right to file a single grievance on behalf of all members who have the same complaint and seek the same remedy.

"The right to such class action grievances is significant in a state like Texas, where collective bargaining is illegal and grievances are often the only avenue for redress," says Texas State Teachers Association President Charles Beard.

The issue of class action (or group) grievances arose when Denton Independent School District (DISD) administrators decided not to give any teacher the top rating in the district's five-level evaluation system.

The result of knocking off the top rating was to artificially depress teachers' overall ratings and make it less likely they would proceed or even stay in the same place on Texas's new career ladder, explains Denton Classroom Teachers Association President Virginia Gallian.

"We filed the group grievance," Gallian adds, "because we had 450 members in the same situation. But neither the superintendent nor the board accepted our right to handle all 450 cases as one."

TSTA then took the case to the state commissioner of education, charging DISD with violating state regulations governing public employee grievances. The commissioner found that the regulations clearly contemplate group grievances in certain instances—of which the Denton case was one.

SOUTHEAST

As this school year began, 327 Georgia teachers did not return to their classrooms. Because they had not passed one of 28 state-mandated subject-area tests by the established deadline, their certificates had expired without renewal.

The U.S. District Court denied a Georgia Association of Educators motion for an injunction against the nonrenewals. He was not, however, ruling on the validity of the teacher tests. That's the subject of a suit now in the courts.

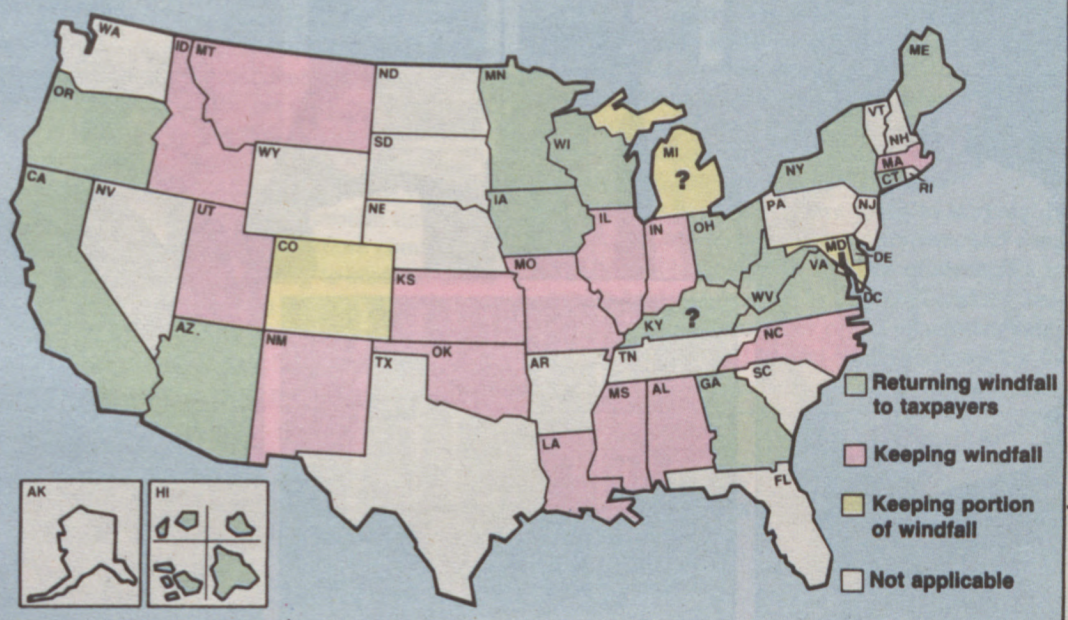
"The number of teachers passing or failing isn't the issue," says GAE President Faye Fox. "The issue continues to be, Are these 28 tests valid, job related, and nondiscriminatory? Based on the available evidence, we believe the answer is *no*."

Georgia teachers are not opposed to accountability, Fox stresses. But they insist on being measured by valid standards through a valid process. GAE's lawsuit alleging the invalidity of the tests will probably be decided next year, and the state could be found liable for some $20 million in back pay and damages.

Meanwhile, GAE members whose certification has not been renewed are working as substitutes or drawing unemployment compensation—and staying in touch with their Association. □

STATES RESPOND TO FEDERAL TAX CHANGES

Schools Get Little of Tax Windfall



About 80 percent of the state income tax "windfall" created by the sweeping new federal tax law will be returned to taxpayers in the form of tax relief, according to a 50-state survey by the National Governors' Association and the National Association of State Budget Officers.

The Tax Reform Act of 1986, which took effect on Jan. 1, 1987, eliminated many former federal tax deductions and exemptions. So it automatically triggered higher state tax revenues for the 32 states that conform to the federal tax base—unless they acted quickly to revise their tax codes.

For tax year 1987, the potential state revenue windfall totals $6.1 billion. The NGA/NASBO survey found that of the 31 states that have determined whether to keep their windfall or return it to taxpayers by lowering state tax rates, 15 (green on the map) are returning it all, two (yellow on the map) are returning *part* of the increase, and 14 (pink on the map) are retaining it all for state programs.

As we go to press, Michigan has yet to decide but seems to be leaning toward keeping a good chunk of its tax windfall. Kentucky also has not decided, but the incoming governor says he plans to give it all back to taxpayers.

Almost as many states are keeping their windfalls as returning them, but the "keeper" states tend to be less heavily populated, so the total dollars are nowhere near equal ($1.1 billion is being retained, vs. $4.6 billion being returned to taxpayers).

In the 14 "keeper" states, will the extra $1.1 billion in tax revenues for 1987 be a nice source of funding for education reforms? Don't count on it. Several of these states are strapped for cash. They'll be using their higher tax revenues just to try to stay afloat in a tough economy.

Among the remaining 17 states (blank on the map), the federal tax reform law has no effect in 12 and would have *decreased* tax revenues in five if those states hadn't taken action to change their tax structures. □

Local Look

SOUTH CAROLINA

After two years of trying to go it alone, 10 angry and frustrated elementary and middle school secretaries in Orangeburg turned to their local Association for help—and soon got their problem solved.

The 10 had been categorized as Class II, while the district's one high school secretary, who did the same work, was in the better-paid Class I. Discussions with the personnel director got them nowhere.

But half the group were members of Orangeburg District Five Education Association, and they asked then-President Linda Badger to intervene. Badger did some hard negotiating, and by the opening of school this fall, all 10 had been reclassified, with an average raise of 10 percent.

The victory brought results in this year's membership drive. "Not only have the other secretaries joined," says local President Eloise Murray, "but we have the highest membership in history, and people are still joining. In some schools, 100 percent of the support personnel have joined. People have seen that we know what members want and go after what they need."

CALIFORNIA

Unity of the education family has brought real benefits for employees of the Beverly Hills schools—including the first California Teachers Association contract for instructional aides.

The teacher members of the Beverly Hills Education Association voted unanimously last year to amend their bylaws to include aides in their Association. Soon thereafter, the 90 Beverly Hills instructional aides voted overwhelmingly to join BHEA.

Both teachers and aides are now enjoying the benefits of their unity. After more than a year of stalemated negotiations, BHEA teachers ratified a three-year contract this fall.

Under the agreement, by September 1988, beginning teachers will earn a minimum salary of $25,986, and teachers with eight years' experience and an M.A. will earn $46,269. Teachers will receive an additional increase of at least 3 percent for the 1988-89 school year.

At the same time, BHEA successfully negotiated a California first—a contract covering its new aide members. In addition to full job protections, benefits, and agency fee, the aides' agreement provides a retroactive wage increase of 3 percent for 1986-87 and a 5 percent increase during this school year.

"BHEA strongly believes instructional aides deserve contract benefits and protections," says Association President Kenneth Eaves. "I hope other California districts will follow this example in providing aides with the employment security they need and deserve."

NEBRASKA

The legendary Warren Buffett, one of the nation's most successful investors, has decided to pay back the teachers in his hometown of Omaha.

Buffett, an alumnus of the Omaha public schools, has established awards of $10,000 each to go to 15 teachers a year for the next five years—no strings attached. The grants are named after his aunt, Alice Buffett, an Association member who taught home economics in Omaha for more than 30 years and died in 1970.

"People still write and ask if I'm related to her," he says.

Candidates for the Alice Buffett Outstanding Teacher Awards must be nominated by others. The winners can spend the money any way they like.

The availability of the new grants might prove to be an incentive that inspires teachers to continue to do their best, Buffett admits. But he intends the awards "more as a way of saying thanks than as a prod."

People often say they value the public schools, notes Omaha Education Association President Vickie Anderson, "but it's immensely gratifying when someone actually proves it—by making so much money available to teachers."

PENNSYLVANIA

Beginning teachers in the Pittsburgh suburb of Mt. Lebanon will start at $24,815 while their colleagues at the top end of the schedule will earn $54,740, thanks to a newly negotiated contract considered a model for teachers in Allegheny County.

Mt. Lebanon's contract gains are not restricted to salary. Among other improvements is a provision giving elementary and secondary teachers the right to decide on their own class schedules. The pact also allows five teachers a year to take half-year sabbaticals at full pay. Cafeteria duty becomes voluntary and paid—enabling those teachers who elect it to earn up to $2,000 a year.

Mt. Lebanon Education Association President Jackie Hughes attributes the contract victory to "great parental support, the determination of the teachers' negotiating team, and the courage of the school board and administration."

LOUISIANA

Louisiana gained its first wall-to-wall education bargaining agent in late October as teachers and support personnel in St. John the Baptist Parish outside New Orleans chose the local NEA/Louisiana Association of Educators affiliate to negotiate their first contract.

The St. John Association of Educators bested an unaffiliated group, 444 to 57, in the first designation of a bargaining agent for Louisiana education employees in 10 years.

The vote culminates several years of effort to win bargaining rights—a struggle that began in 1984 with a 40-day strike. Since then, many school board members have been replaced. The present board, which took office last January, voted to grant union representation if employees voted for it.

Bargaining for a 1988-89 contract will begin in February. Meanwhile, the local will be surveying members on what they'd like to see in a contract.

"We will weigh the desires of each group," SJAE President Debbie Schum notes, "janitors, teachers, bus drivers, teacher aides, clerical workers, lunchroom employees, and maintenance personnel."

MINNESOTA

Northern Minnesota's "Iron Range" is suffering extremely difficult economic times. That fact didn't stop voters in the town of Virginia (pop. 11,000) this fall. They passed a $2.5 million bond issue for a new physical education building with two teaching gyms—by a vote of 2,358 to 988, with the highest voter turnout in 17 years.

The 130-member Virginia Education Association worked long and hard for passage—making yard signs and billboards, taking out an ad in the newspaper, distributing leaflets, and talking to friends, neighbors, and students who in turn volunteered to help.

Was it all worth it? VEA President Bill Somero answers with an unqualified *yes*. The bond issue was "good for the school, the kids, and public relations," he says. "And VEA's work on this issue went miles to cement positive relations with our board and administration." □

THE SORRY STATE OF EDUCATION IN WEST VIRGINIA

Vincent Senski

Randolph County Education Association activists (left to right) Doug Willams, Perry Bryant, Carol Banghart, Kevin Boggs. (Inset) Sistersville Middle School, 90 years old.

Educators Gear Up To Fight Back

School employees throughout West Virginia are fed up with their miserable working conditions and poor salaries and benefits. More than 4,000 fire code violations in dilapidated school buildings, no money for textbooks, salaries ranking 44th in the nation, a $64.8 million loss in retirement investment funds—the list goes on and on.

Local Associations throughout the state are working to address the education crisis and alert the nation about the deplorable conditions in West Virginia schools. The effort started last July when the WVEA delegation to the NEA Representative Assembly introduced and helped pass a new business item alerting potential teaching candidates to the state's dire economic conditions.

In Randolph County—as in several other locations—Association activists are combing voter registration records to identify and contact citizens most likely to support the Uniform School Funding Amendment. This amendment, to be presented to voters in a special election on March 5, would equalize the tax burden among the Mountain State's 55 counties and increase the funds available for education.

Last July WVEA filed suit against the governor and state legislature, charging that the state budget for fiscal year 1987-88—$13.4 million less than the legal requirement to meet the school aid formula—violates the state constitution's call for "a thorough and efficient schooling for every child."

The Taylor County Education Association has campaigns going on two fronts.

"Locally, we're meeting with hospital administrators to try to find a way to reduce or waive the medical insurance plan deductible for school employees," explains TCEA President Don Craft. "We're also writing letters to networks and national TV news shows—like *60 Minutes*—asking that they publicize our plight."

Craft hopes national public pressure will help improve the situation. "What's at stake," he says, "is the education of our children and the future of our state." □

IN THE CLASSROOM

Children of Alcoholics

RECOGNIZING THEIR 'SECRET' SUFFERING

An estimated 28 million Americans have at least one alcoholic parent. What can be done for the four or five of them who show up in your classroom each year?

Gretchen Kelley, a high school guidance counselor in Somerville, Mass., often breathes a sigh of relief when her students admit to her that their parents are alcoholics.

"Students usually don't want to breach a deep-seated family policy of covering up alcoholism," says Association member Kelley. "But when I ask them point-blank if alcoholism is a problem in their family, they're usually relieved. They can begin to get help."

The students referred to Kelley have problems in school. They've failed to do assignments, withdrawn from school life, taken on a bizarre appearance, or missed lots of classes. Often it takes three or four half-hour sessions before students will talk about what's going on in their home life.

Students with an alcoholic parent generally feel a strong sense of shame. They're reluctant to reveal what they've grown to view as a "secret." Teachers or counselors trying to detect the problem face a wall of resistance and denial.

Nationwide, some 7 million youngsters under the age of 20 have an alcoholic parent. That works out to four to six children in the average classroom of 25. Experts estimate that only 5 percent of the children of alcoholics get any help for their suffering—suffering that takes many forms.

"The alcoholic home is almost always dysfunctional," observes Holly Lenz, a manager at the National Association for Children of Alcoholics (NACoA) in South Laguna, Calif. "Kids are made to question their thoughts, feelings, and concepts of reality. They generally have severe self-doubt."

Efforts to help children in alcoholic families are, fortunately, taking root, thanks largely to significant research advances over the past 10 years that have greatly increased what we know about the stigma, guilt, and long-term harmful effects that the children of alcoholics experience.

For the last three years Sue Cropper, a counselor at Millard North High School in Omaha, Nebr., has run a special weekly support group for children of alcoholics.

The message?

"You can't change your home, but you can build your self-esteem by focusing on yourself and learning to handle your feelings," Cropper says.

At one week's session, students in the support group might make collages that express their feelings. Another week they might view a videotape on the consequences of denying feelings, or simply go to lunch together. The groups remain small (12 to 15 members) and voluntary.

In Somerville, Mass., and adjacent Cambridge, CASPAR—a 12-year-old treatment facility for drug and alcohol abuse that's considered a national model—gives teachers and counselors a decided edge in identifying and helping the children of alcoholic parents. CASPAR stands for the Cambridge and Somerville Program for Alcoholism Rehabilitation.

Through CASPAR, observes Priscilla Quirk, the program's assistant director, "teachers begin to feel more comfortable with the idea of talking to students about a family alcoholism problem. And when the teacher feels comfortable, students can really open up."

Teachers should not take on the role of counselor, Quirk cautions. But their ability to recognize the child of an alcoholic is the critical first step to reaching out to community help providers. Somerville High's Gretchen Kelley encounters five or six children a month who reveal either to a teacher or to her that their parents are alcoholics.

What are the messages any teacher, counselor, nurse, or other school employee can instill that can help the child of an alcoholic? CASPAR recommends the following:

► You're not alone. Many families go through similar turmoil.

► Your parents' alcoholism is not your fault.

► Alcoholism is a disease.

► Alcoholics can recover, but they need help to do so.

► You need and should get help for yourself. Seek out a sympathetic relative or a local self-help group (Alateen).

Patricia Ferris, past president of the American School Counselors Association, recommends that children of alcoholics be briefed on the same emergency coping skills now taught to latch-key children—from knowing what hotlines to call to keeping change handy for a phone call to a supportive friend.

But NACoA's Holly Lenz speaks for many experts when she emphasizes that teachers and counselors cannot do it alone.

"Every school district," she says, "needs to identify the service providers in the community—whether it's Alateen, a local hospital, or a private psychiatric clinic."

After all, adds Lenz, the symptoms of the child of an alcoholic are nothing short of profound. Guilt, fear, confusion, inability to express emotions can scar children for a lifetime.

"The schools can't be expected to fix these things," Lenz concludes. "But by learning to look and listen for possible signs of parental alcoholism, school employees who care can be a key link in the system that does the fixing."

—Vicky Lytle

Parental Alcoholism: Trouble at a Glance

► An estimated 28 million Americans have at least one alcoholic parent.
► One of three U.S. families currently reports alcohol abuse by a family member.
► More than half of all alcoholics have an alcoholic parent.
► Children of alcoholics are at high risk for developing alcoholism themselves or marrying someone who becomes alcoholic.
► Children born to alcoholics are at high risk for developing attention deficit disorders, stress-related medical problems, fetal alcohol syndrome, and other alcohol-related birth defects.
► In up to 90 percent of child abuse cases, alcohol is a significant factor.
► Children of alcoholics are also frequently victims of incest, child neglect, and other forms of violence and exploitation.
► Children in an alcoholic home often develop an inability to trust, an extreme need to control, an excessive sense of responsibility, and a denial of their feelings—resulting in low self-esteem, depression, guilt, and difficulty maintaining satisfying relationships.
► Children of alcoholics are prone to learning difficulties, anxiety, attempted and completed suicide, eating disorders, and compulsive achieving.
► The problems of most children of alcoholics remain *invisible* because their coping behavior tends to be approval-seeking and socially acceptable. However, a disproportionate number of the youngsters entering the juvenile justice system, courts, prisons, and mental health facilities are the children of alcoholics.

Source: National Association for Children of Alcoholics, South Laguna, Calif.

Want To Know More?

Al-Anon Family Groups, P.O. Box 182, Madison Square Garden, New York, NY 10159. 212/683-1771. Self-help groups for family members and friends of problem drinkers—including Alateen for youth and special groups for adult children of alcoholics. Local groups are listed in most phone directories.

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163. 212/686-1100. The largest network of self-help groups in the world for recovering alcoholics and problem drinkers.

CASPAR Alcohol Education Program, 226 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA 02143. 617/623-2080. Curriculum materials available for grades K-3 and 3-12.

Children of Alcoholics Foundation, Inc. (COAF), 540 Madison Ave., 23rd Floor, New York, NY 10022. 212/980-5394. A nonprofit organization created to assist children of alcoholics and their parents.

National Association for Children of Alcoholics (NACoA), 31706 Coast Highway, Suite 201, South Laguna, CA 92677. 714/499-3889. Publishes a quarterly newsletter. Local affiliates sponsor support groups for children of alcoholics.

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol Information (NCALI). P.O. Box 2345, Rockville, MD 20852. 301/468-2600. Collects information on prevention and treatment of alcohol problems and shares knowledge through distribution of free materials, a quarterly subscription journal, and free literature searches of its data base.

National Council on Alcoholism, Inc. (NCA). 12 West 21st St., New York, NY 10010. 212/206-6770. Gives information about alcoholism through more than 300 local affiliates, some of which provide counseling for alcoholics and their families.

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"You look them in the eye and ask," advises counselor Gretchen Kelley.

CAMPAIGN '88

Who Will Get NEA's Endorsement?

Local Associations have been sounding out members on the 1988 Presidential candidates, in preparation for NEA's endorsement decision.

If one of the dozen White House hopefuls had walked into the second of three open hearings held by Florida's Pinellas Classroom Teachers Association this fall on NEA's Presidential endorsement process, he would have gained an insight that even highly paid political advisers couldn't provide.

The comments of some 20 Association members who turned out despite hurricane warnings for the mid-October meeting in Largo, halfway down Florida's Gulf Coast, were by turns wise, idealistic, and skeptical. They provided early warning signals that the 1988 election will be anything but a sleeper.

The Pinellas County story was repeated all across the nation this fall as thousands of NEA members came together at open hearings to compare the candidates for America's highest office.

At the Pinellas County hearing, as at other hearings, member reactions to the Presidential candidates and the NEA endorsement process included both enthusiasm and a kind of ho-hum reluctance to endorse at this early date.

Urged Pinellas Classroom Teachers Association President Don Macneale, "We've got to seize this opportunity to build from the grass roots up. We must forge a consensus—even if it's just on what counts to us in terms of candidate selection."

Following Macneale's lead, members talked of image, electability, track record, and character as the four key issues they would weigh as they evaluated Presidential candidates.

"I wouldn't like to think that image is going to be such an overriding issue in this election," noted Marshall Koppel, a guidance counselor at Osceola Middle School in Seminole. "I get impatient when I hear someone say 'I wouldn't want to put that geek into office' just because he doesn't dress as if he was packaged on Madison Avenue. But we do need to think about the way the general public is going to be thinking and take a look at image as well as platform."

Several members backed the wisdom of early endorsement, noting that since 59 percent of the delegates to the Democratic National Convention and almost 39 percent of the delegates to the Republican National Convention will be chosen by mid-March, hesitating means losing the opportunity to help elect those all-important delegates.

Cliff McBride

"The slick, packaged candidate has never been for me."—Bob Beaudet, phys ed teacher in St. Petersburg.

Cliff McBride

"Early endorsement can make candidates electable." —Diana Livesay, president of Florida's Pinellas ESP local.

Cliff McBride

"I'm a Republican, but so far I have no one to support."—Janey Ball, Pinellas Park fifth grade teacher.

John Sunderland/PHOTOSTAFF

Beverly Ingle, vice-president of Colorado's Cherry Creek local, saw no clear frontrunner.

John Sunderland/PHOTOSTAFF

Members of the Cherry Creek Education Association converged at President Dan Morris's home to watch videotapes of NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell interviewing White House hopefuls who seek NEA endorsement. From left: Dan Morris, Vicki Lisman, Beverly Ingle, Janell Riese, Nancy Chicola, Lynda Neff.

Cliff McBride

"We would be abdicating our ability to lead if we didn't opt for early endorsement."—Doug Tuthill, St. Petersburg psychology teacher.

Cliff McBride

"Where is the 'people's' candidate? I don't go for slick politicians."—Jana Maples, a fourth grade teacher in Pinellas Park.

Cliff McBride

"I don't think we can afford to endorse a candidate before the first primaries, when the frontrunners will emerge."—Sharon Flory, Pinellas County PAC chair.

Across the country in the Denver, Colo., suburb of Cherry Creek, similar endorsement discussions took place at eight open hearings held in Association members' homes and local schools.

After reviewing candidates' responses to NEA questionnaires and watching videotapes of NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell interviewing each hopeful, members attending a hearing at Dan Morris' house agreed they were not yet prepared to endorse any candidate.

"We all agreed that we'd want a candidate who came across as articulate and knowledgeable," reports Morris, president of the Cherry Creek Education Association, "but we couldn't pick a leader out of the pack."

The assorted views aired at this fall's open hearings were all summed up in reports by each state affiliate in early November. President Futrell will have these reports on her mind December 3 when she goes before the NEA-PAC Council, the governing body of NEA's political action arm, to make her official recommendation on which candidates, if any, should receive NEA's endorsement.

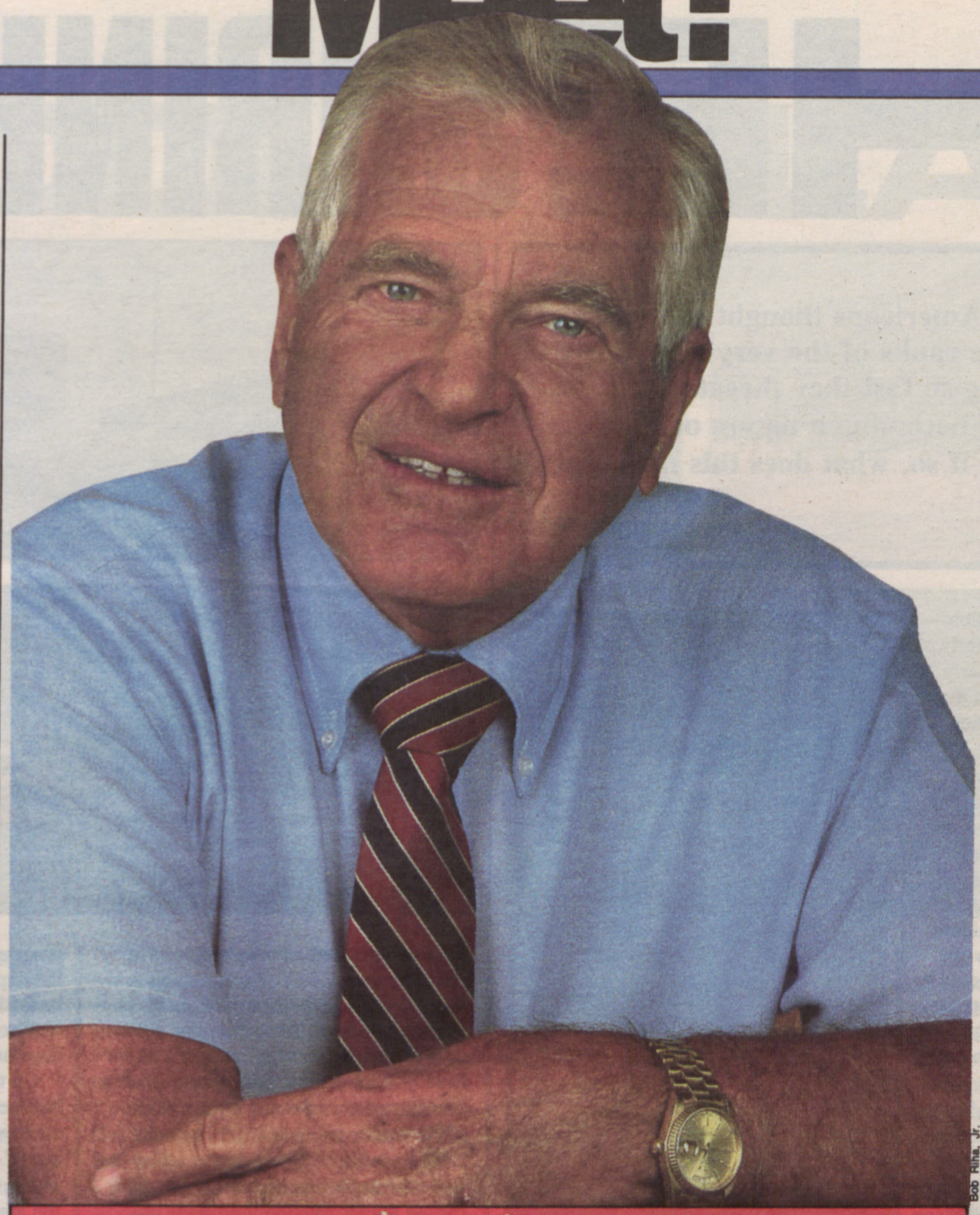
To become Association policy, President Futrell's recommendation would have to be approved by 58 percent votes of both the NEA-PAC Council and NEA's Board of Directors.

No NEA-PAC activities in support of an NEA-endorsed candidate can take place in any state until the state Association formally concurs with the endorsement.

"Whatever way the endorsement decision goes in December," notes Ken Melley, NEA's Government Relations director, "I think one thing is clear. A lot of groups make Presidential endorsements, but no national organization makes its Presidential decision more deliberately—or openly—than NEA."

—Vicky Lytle

Meet:



Will Hayes

72 and Still Lighting Kids' Fires

In September 1936, Will Hayes walked into a New Jersey classroom, beginning a career in education that's spanned half a century.

After time out for World War II, Hayes moved to the University of California at Santa Barbara, where he taught in the school of education and then served as dean of men. Hayes left UCSB in 1954 to return to the elementary classroom. He's been there ever since—teaching sixth grade at Santa Barbara's Vieja Valley School.

Teaching may be Hayes' most abiding love—but it's far from his only interest. He's an accomplished balloonist and pilot, a world traveler, and author of published works on topics from football to air safety.

A prolific writer of curriculum units, workbooks, and tips for the elementary grades, Hayes received an honorary doctorate from Jersey City State College two years ago.

At the age of 72, Hayes still plays golf and tennis regularly—and doesn't include retirement from the classroom among his immediate plans. NEA Today *writer Heidi Steffens talked with Hayes this fall at his home in Santa Barbara.*

What's your approach to students?
I never try to be my students' friend—I'm their teacher.

I touch every child every day—pat a head, tweak an ear. I also tell my students how good they are—and that I love them. I have no qualms about using the word *love*, and I tell parents that.

You don't teach a class of kids—you teach individuals. I get to know every student. I never dismiss my class as a group. Instead I say, "Anyone may go who's an only child... a twin...who has an aardvark...a calico cat." You learn about your students—and they learn. Someone is bound to ask what an aardvark or a calico cat is.

Your approach to parents?
I require every parent of my kids to come in the evening of the first day of school. We discuss my expectations, rules, and so on. Such as no television Monday afternoons through Thursday nights. And no notes from parents about why homework isn't completed—that's between me and the kids.

Has your teaching changed over the years?
I find myself becoming more innovative the longer I teach.

I expect a lot from my class. They get an assignment sheet every week—a subject-by-subject list of the work they must complete. They're responsible for doing their own work—in class, at the library, at home. My kids write a poem every week. There's a creative writing assignment every couple of days and three major research papers during the year.

We use materials I've developed and reference books—almanacs, telephone books, encyclopedias. My kids learn to find things out for themselves. We do a lot of work with calculators and computers. But I spend time at the beginning of the year on number facts. After all, I tell the kids, the batteries may go dead.

Are you still teaching because you need the income?
Not at all. I own a string of football camps—summer camps for high school players—across the country. My teaching salary is a small part of my income.

I teach because I love it. There's nothing I'd rather do.

Why sixth grade?
Youngsters at that age have wonderful, curious minds. Their slates are blank. The teacher is the catalyst.

I always say I teach the four R's. Responsibility is the fourth R—and I'd make it the first.

Every year I have someone from the city bus company come in and explain the bus system. The next day I send the kids out in groups of four or five to ride the buses and take notes about what they see.

Administrators don't like it. "Hayes," they tell me, "you can't do this. The kids are alone—no adults, no control." Of course not! The whole purpose is to teach responsibility.

Do administrators get in the way of good teaching?
Yes. The other main roadblocks are textbooks and tests.

Nobody in Washington, D.C., or the state capital knows more about the kids in my classroom than I. The classroom teacher knows more about what he's doing in his classroom than does anyone else.

The state of California mandates standardized tests. My class is always in the top 10 percent. I not only don't teach to the test—I don't know what's on the test and I don't follow the prescribed course of study.

I do insist that my students master the tools of learning. I'm not as concerned about facts. If kids have the tools, they'll learn the facts in the process of using the tools.

What's your feeling about class size?
I won't accept more than 25 kids in my class. I send the 26th student back to the office.

Teachers need to stand up for small classes. We need to tell parents, "If you want the best education for your child, I need your support on this."

There's been an erosion of support for education at the levels that can support it best—the federal and state governments. Money that should be spent on educating our children is being spent on armaments. Hundreds of billions for the military, a few billion for our youth. We've got some very misguided national priorities.

Parents have to generate the pressure to change the priorities. If they did, if we could generate half the pressure on Congress about funding schools that was generated over the Bork nomination, think what could happen!

What do you most want to communicate to students?
A father came in recently to talk about his son's problems in math. This is a kid who's going through real stress. I told the father the important thing isn't math. It's that the child never smiles. I told him to work on making the kid secure—let me worry about the math.

No matter how much subject matter you teach, if kids don't feel good about themselves, they won't be whole people.

Any advice for new teachers?
I think a teacher has to be something of a rebel—has to question the conventional wisdom. Teachers have to fight for what they believe is right—not just accept what the legislature or administration says.

Teachers should be people who set kids on fire. We need artists in classrooms—and administrators need to realize that not all artists paint with the same colors.

As a teacher you should never try to push kids into your pattern and expect any real learning to take place. You've got to be aware that each child is different—and has something to contribute.

Teachers who exult when children succeed—and bleed when they hurt—these are the creative teachers who ignite kids. □

AMERICA'S CHANGING FACE

THE SHRINKING

A few years ago, most Americans thought of themselves as middle class. But the ranks of the very rich and very poor have been growing so fast they threaten to squeeze out the middle. Are we becoming a nation of "haves" and "have-nots"? And if so, what does this mean for the public schools?

In 1968 a presidential commission warned that ours was becoming two societies, black and white. Nearly two decades later, economists warn that we may be dividing into two societies, rich and poor.

As members of the middle-income group move upward to affluence or lose their grip and slide into poverty, the true middle class—traditionally the largest group in our country, the American Dream come true—is melting away.

No one expects the American middle class to disappear, leaving only a void between rich and poor—but few would deny that it's lost much of its substance in the past decade. Some of the signs economists have noted appear in the box below.

The middle class isn't defined, of course, by income alone. What people do with their income and what they hope to make of the future are part of what makes a middle class. And, because of a combination of economic and demographic factors, the definition of our middle class is shifting.

In the 1950s and '60s a middle class family owned its own house and a car and could afford to send the children to college. Usually only one adult earned the living for the whole family.

Today, many middle-income families can't afford a house, let alone college for the kids. And whether a family's affluent, poor, or middle class now depends in large part on how many family members hold jobs. Families with only one adult working are likely to have trouble making ends meet, while a second salary can make it possible to buy a house, take vacations, or send a child to college.

At the same time that a single salary can no longer provide the traditional insignia of the middle class, a high divorce rate is increasing the number of families with just one adult. Usually that adult is a woman—and on average, when a woman is divorced, her disposable income falls 73 percent (a man's *rises* 42 percent). Barely a third of women raising children alone receive child support payments from the fathers.

If middle-income people can't even buy their own homes, then who's supporting all those expensive specialty shops that offer anything from gourmet cookies to BMW's? For one thing, it's people who've given up on ever being able to buy a home. Nestled in rented quarters, doubled up with parents, or sharing with other singles, they have cash to spend on designer sunglasses because they're not saving up for a future they never expect to afford.

If the nation's middle class is shrinking, what effect will this have on the schools?

Already about 20 percent of U.S. children live below the poverty line—a rate that's risen by more than a third since 1970. A sixth of our four- and five-year-olds live in homes where no adult is employed, and another sixth have parents whose earnings are below the poverty level. If the current trend continues, many more of the students in tomorrow's classrooms will be poor.

From the school or elsewhere in the society, these millions of economically deprived children will need to get nourishing food so they can study and grow. They'll need medical care—a sixth of our kindergartners are not covered by health insurance. Most will need programs like Head Start to give them the experiences, from art museums to bus rides, their parents don't have the money—and often not the time, or perhaps not the information—to provide.

On the other side of the divide between rich and poor are those communities where poverty is out of sight and out of mind. In some of these communities, public schools are beneficiaries of the ample tax base. In others, parents are moving their children into nonpublic schools they can now afford.

Gwinnett County, Ga., is one newly affluent community whose schools are bulging at the seams. The area that boasts the world's largest fiber optic plant and the Hayes computer modem factory also is home to plants manufacturing everything from software and satellite dishes to windows and doors, as well as a flourishing research and development industry.

Georgia science teacher Jim Nix

Unemployment is a mere 2 to 3 percent, and the school system absorbs the influx of 18 new students a day by building two new schools a year—and will do so at least through 1988-89.

Association member Jim Nix teaches biology and physical science at Central Gwinnett High School in Lawrenceville. Nix went to school in the area and has taught there since he finished college 12 years ago.

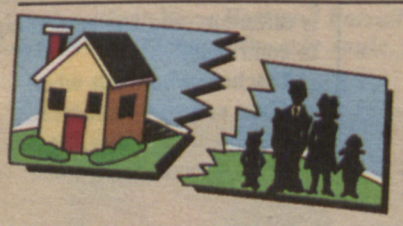
"We see a lot of Mercedes and even a Rolls Royce or two—and not many dirt roads any more," Nix says. "The shops are more expensive now. If the middle class has vanished from Gwinnett, it's because it's moved up."

Today's students are driving nicer cars, Nix notes—and there are other changes as well.

"A majority of the students used to be second-generation at the high school,"

• The wealthiest 40 percent of American families get 67.3 percent of national income, the poorest 40 percent get 15.7 percent, and the middle 20 percent get just 17 percent.

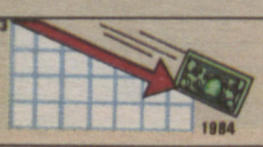
• Of all new jobs created between 1963 and 1978, 23 percent paid at the poverty or "near-poverty" level, while of new jobs created between 1978 and 1984, 48 percent paid that little.



• A family now needs to earn about $37,000 a year to afford a median-priced house, but median family income is just $27,735. The average 30-year-old man who bought a home in 1984 put 44 percent of his income (higher on average than a woman's) into house payments.

• 59 percent of men and 47 percent of women between the ages of 18 and 24 depend on their parents for housing—in fact, two out of five men aged 18 to 29 live with their parents.

• Through the 1980s the cost of a college education has risen twice as fast as inflation, and it's still going up. More than three-fourths of all Americans believe that soon the average family will be unable to afford college for its children.



• Between 1973 and 1984, the real income of American families dropped 8.3 percent. Income of Black families dropped 10.6 percent.

AMERICA'S CHANGING FACE

MIDDLE CLASS

Dan Nierling

Dan Nierling

In Waterloo, Iowa, disused schools (far left) are one result of the closing of the giant Rath Blackhawk meatpacking plant and of small manufacturers hit by the local depression. As jobs were lost, homes for sale and stores for rent became more and more common. Most people hit by layoffs have either left Waterloo or taken big pay cuts—and the schools are feeling the pinch, in local taxes and state per-pupil payments.

David Perdew

David Perdew

David Perdew

David Perdew

Until a few years ago Gwinnett County, Ga., outside Atlanta, was a rural area laced with dirt roads. Today, high-tech industries like the Hayes modem plant have brought prosperity and population to the county. Spacious new homes and a thriving new BMW dealership testify to the community's rapidly growing affluence, which has attracted so many newcomers that the district is building two new schools every year.

he says. "Now, with all the coming and going, they don't feel the same about the school—or the town. A lot of them come from single-parent homes or have stepparents—a few years ago that wasn't so common around here."

The middle class is vanishing in Waterloo, Iowa, too—but not into affluence. The signs are hard to miss: in a mall, the shallow display windows mask vacant shops; houses are neglected, boarded up, rented out, or just abandoned, the lawns overgrown with weeds; the cars on the streets are a little older every year.

For the past few years, since the Rath meatpacking plant closed and the John Deere farm equipment factory laid off some 12,000 of its 17,000 workers, Waterloo's middle class has faced a crisis.

"We used to have a strong middle class here," says science teacher Clayton Wilcox, "top-of-the-line blue-collar workers and technicians. John Deere employees were making over $24 an hour plus benefits. They were among the best-paid industrial workers in the world.

"Now everyone who needs a job and has marketable skills has left to look for work. The data processing people have gone. In school we still have some kids with all the advantages—and more and more kids on subsidized lunches."

A local clinic saw more malnourished children in the first three months of 1987 than in the last three years put together.

Waterloo's total school enrollment has dropped from about 19,000 in the early 1970s to about 12,000. Last year four elementary schools closed, and this year three more are closing—along with two intermediate schools. A high school building will be used as an intermediate school.

The loss of students has meant that the school system loses 25 to 30 teaching positions a year, and there's less money for texts, the media center, supplies. Teachers bring their own paper for running off worksheets.

"Of course it affects the children," says first grade teacher Jean Seeland. "Sometimes one parent finds a job elsewhere and the family can't afford to join them. When John Deere was doing the massive layoffs, some kids were upset because mom and dad were out of work, and they worried about having to move."

Some of the men who went to find work in Oklahoma, Colorado, and Texas in those early days have come back, discouraged. Many are on unemployment benefits; others earn half or a fourth of what they brought home before.

Dan Nierling

Iowa teacher Clayton Wilcox

"I teach in a lower socioeconomic area, and it's gotten a bit more crowded," Seeland notes. "But our supportive services have been excellent, and a lot of community groups have responded to the problem."

"People here are both proud and intelligent—and they still believe," insists Wilcox. "Midwesterners have seen terrible things happen before, and they're still here."

Wilcox is a living testimony to that staying power: West Intermediate School, where he teaches, is just four miles from the school he attended as a student.

The story of Gwinnett County isn't all good news—the great influx of students and the interplay of the newcomers' ways of thinking and living with those of long-time residents present some problems that have to be worked out. Change brings stress even when it's change for the better.

Nor is the story of Waterloo all bad news: some teachers have smaller classes now and are finding a new opportunity to give individual attention to students who badly need it.

Still, the erosion of the middle class brings more vulnerable students and more stringent school budgets to communities where good jobs are vanishing, even while it can bring new possibilities in those localities that are enjoying new, well-paying industries.

The new economic picture is placing new demands on the public schools. School employees are doing their best to meet the challenge—but they can succeed fully only if the nation commits its resources to the effort. As the problem originated in the wider society, so the society must take a share in reaching the solution.

—Jane Power

The Black Middle Class: Is It Really Growing?

In recent years many commentators have hailed a significant growth in the Black middle class in the United States. But the picture's not so simple as they'd lead us to believe.

True, the number of Blacks in middle-income brackets has grown, but the number in other brackets has grown faster. In fact, between 1969 and 1984 the proportion of Blacks with an income between $20,000 and $50,000 dropped from 32 percent to 29 percent. The proportion with an income of less than $10,000 rose from 35 percent to 39 percent, and the proportion with an income above $50,000 rose from 3 to 5 percent. Today's Black median income, like that of Hispanics, falls in the range classified as "near poor."

Black men's earnings are on average less than those of white men—a Black college graduate earns about the same as a white man who graduated from high school. That makes a family's second income more important in the Black than in the white community. But even with many Black women working, in 1985 the average income of white working couples was 20 percent higher than that of Black working couples.

What happens to the Black middle class when hard times hit a community? In Waterloo, Iowa, devastated by layoffs, East High School teacher Ray Dial sees it this way: "When things are going well, Black folk have a 50-50 chance of doing well. When things are going badly, we have no chance. If they're not hiring anybody white, they won't hire us."

But, Dial stresses, the Black community knows how to dig in. "Black Americans have suffered so long we're used to hard times. We'll go back to red beans and rice instead of roast and cauliflower. We don't know how we're going to make it, but we know we will make it."

In a time of trouble, he adds, nobody's alone. "When one group suffers, we all suffer. No solution can work unless it works for all of us."

—J.P.

Dan Nierling

Iowa's Ray Dial: Black Americans have seen plenty of hard times.

RESOURCES

Idea Exchange

Saying It with Music

Throughout history, music has accompanied most human activities—from work to ceremonies to political action. Songs described the lives and passed down the traditions of peoples and localities.

Today, teachers are combining music with other academic media to arouse students' motivation and deepen their learning in every subject from history to math. A few examples:

On Mondays or Tuesdays, Suzanne Cusick's elementary music students discuss a piece of classical music, and on Wednesdays Ashland, Oregon, radio station KSOR plays the same piece at 7 p.m. Youngsters come into the next class reporting "My mom and dad thought that was neat," or maybe "They wondered why you picked *that* one."

Cusick presents music from Gregorian chants to Stravinsky. She starts off the study of Gregorian chants by turning off the lights and telling the students they're monks who have taken a vow of silence. After listening to the chants for a few minutes, the class discusses what they know about monks, cathedrals, the whole medieval culture—"a surprising amount," Cusick says.

In Federal Way, Wash., David Ritland has coordinated songs of the Civil War period with fifth grade social studies. "'The Homespun Dress' came from the Southerners' need to make their own cloth when they lost their access to New England's textile mills," Ritland points out. "'Tenting on the Old Camp Ground' expresses the whole tragedy of war. And the spirituals the slaves sang, like 'Follow the Drinking Gourd,' carry messages about escapes."

Ritland has also written songs about seashore creatures to complement kindergarten units while reinforcing concepts of rhythm he was teaching his fifth graders.

Since 1966, social studies teacher Steve Landfried of Madison, Wisc., has used popular songs in courses from economics to psychology. In psych, Billy Joel's "The Stranger" leads into a discussion of personality development.

Landfried has used "The Night They Drove Ol' Dixie Down" to set up ninth grade U.S. history classes for role playing: each student listens to the song from a different viewpoint—sharecropper, slave, planter, abolitionist. Landfried's economics class has studied the consumer mentality through Jerry Jeff Walker's "Blow Up Your TV, Throw Away Your Paper."

Elisse Price of Wayland, Mass., teaches her elementary music students at Claypit Hill School through performances. Her classes have learned about the 1930s while producing *Annie* and about Victorian culture from *The Pirates of Penzance*. This year the local cable TV station will broadcast their production of *The Sound of Music*.

Price also uses choral narratives like *Tall Tom Jefferson* and *How the West Was Really Won*. Her students, with the help of their classroom teachers, have researched school productions for Martin Luther King's birthday.

When studying the music theory concept of notes with numerical value, Price's students transcribe math problems into music. □

Free or Inexpensive

READING

The Complete Super Bowl Story: Games I-XXI. Richard J. Brenner. A history of the Super Bowl games for low-ability readers—with sheets for recording statistics for Super Bowl XXII (1988). 160 pp. $2.95 plus $1.25 postage & handling prepaid. Ask about discounts on orders of 25 or more copies. Richard Brenner, East End Publishing, 54 Alexander Dr., Syosset, NY 11791 (516/364-9723).

NATIVE AMERICANS

Teaching the Indian Child: A Bilingual/Multicultural Approach. Jon Reyhner, editor. Presents information for teachers of Native American children on such topics as teaching social studies or reading comprehension and working with parents. 280 pp. $6; $5 each if 10 or more copies go to the same address. Dr. Jon Reyhner, Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, Eastern Montana College, Billings, MT 59101.

SCHOOL AND FAMILY

Teachers and Parents: An Adult-to-Adult Approach. Dorothy Rich. The president of the Home and School Institute describes ways teachers can enlist parents' help in extending the work of the school into the home. 112 pp. Stock no. 0277-6-00-D. $9.95. NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516.

HAM RADIO

Archie's Ham Radio Adventure. Archie Radio Club and American Radio Relay League (ARRL). An Archie comic book designed to interest young people in grades 3-8 in ham radio. Free. Teachers and youth group sponsors should specify their name, school address and phone, grade level, subjects taught, supporting ham radio club name (if necessary, ask ARRL to identify a local club), and number of copies needed. Archie Program, American Radio Relay League, 225 Main St., Suite NEA, Newington, CT 06111.

TELEVISION

Unplugging the Plug-In Drug. Marie Winn. Handbook by the author of *The Plug-In Drug* outlines plans for families, classrooms, and entire schools to trade TV viewing for a week of other fun-filled activities—all for the purpose of bringing TV watching under control. 206 pp. $7.95 plus $1 postage & handling. Ask about bulk rates. From booksellers or by mail from Penguin Books, UPD/I, 299 Murray Hill Pkwy., East Rutherford, NJ 07073.

SCIENCE

Whale Fact Sheets. Two reproducible information sheets give the lowdown on whales. Free; send self-addressed stamped (22¢) envelope. American Cetacean Society, P.O. Box 2639, San Pedro, CA 90731-0943.

BOOK STAND

The Roberts Book Holder. Holds any size book, magazine, or notebook upright, and simplifies page-turning for readers who have limited use of their hands or who must use their hands while they read—for example, to keyboard or to prepare food. Made of two polystyrene sections that fit together into a flat "case" (7½" x 14" x 7/16"). $9.95 each plus $2.13 shipping & handling prepaid. Roberts Book Mark Co., 3038 N. Federal Hwy., Times Square Bldg. H, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33306.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The Doable Dozen: A Checklist of Practical Ideas for School-Business Partnerships. Cynthia W. Shelton. Gives more than 300 examples of actual school-business partnerships in such areas as student career awareness, curriculum enhancement, and staff professional development. 88 pp. $7.95, plus 10 percent for shipping. Ask about discounts for bulk orders. National Community Education Association, 119 N. Payne St., Alexandria, VA 22314. □

TV/Radio Tips

Sunday Movie—*CBS-TV, Sunday, Dec. 6, 9-11 p.m. ET:* "A Hobo's Christmas." Drama about a hobo's reunion with his long-estranged son. Barnard Hughes stars.

Afterschool Specials—*ABC-TV, Wednesday, Dec. 16, 4-5 p.m. ET:* "Amazing Grace." Rebroadcast. A family gospel singing group is on the brink of success until a recording contract causes a bitter dispute. Della Reese and Tempestt Bledsoe star. *Wednesday, Jan. 20, 4-5 p.m. ET*: "Things My Mother Told Me." Verbal abuse takes an insidious toll on one family.

A Christmas Memory—*ABC-TV, Wednesday, Dec. 16, 10-11 p.m. ET.* Award-winning drama of a rural southern Christmas in the 1930s. First aired 20 years ago.

A Child's Christmas in Wales—*PBS, Wednesday, Dec. 23; check local listings for times.* One-hour drama captures the spirit of Dylan Thomas' beloved work.

Eye on the Sparrow—*NBC-TV, sometime in December; check local listings for dates and times.* Made-for-TV movie explores the difficulties facing visually impaired persons. A study guide appeared in the November *NEA Today*. For additional guides, contact your local NBC station.

Foxfire—*CBS-TV, sometime in December; check local listings for dates and times.* An Appalachian farm family rooted to the land faces difficulties.

Kids America: Art on the Air—*American Public Radio; check local listings for dates and times.* Popular Monday-Friday children's series airs commissioned works by contemporary composers during its "Radiovision" segment and invites children to phone in and discuss their impressions with program hosts.

Little Match Girl—*NBC-TV, sometime in December; check local listings for dates and times.* World premiere movie of the famous Hans Christian Andersen Christmas story. Keshia Knight Pulliam and Rue McClanahan star.

Nutcracker on Ice—*HBO, sometime in December; check local listings for dates and times.* Championship skaters Dorothy Hamill, Robin Cousins, and JoJo Starbuck transform the Nutcracker ballet into a production on ice.

The Woman Who Willed a Miracle—*HBO, sometime in December; check local listings for dates and times.* A woman helps a severely retarded boy realize his talent as a pianist. Cloris Leachman stars.

The Fortunate Pilgrim—*NBC-TV, sometime in December or January; check local listings for dates and times.* Two-part presentation of Mario Puzo's autobiographical novel. Sophia Loren and Edward James star.

Voices and Visions—*PBS, sometime in January; check local listings for dates and times.* This 13-part series produced by the New York Center for Visual History examines the lives and works of American poets. For a study guide, send $15.95 to Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 2460 Kerper Blvd., Dubuque, IA 52001 (319/588-1451). □

RESOURCES

AWARD-WINNING CBS SCHOOLBREAK SPECIALS PROBE ADOLESCENT PROBLEMS

Want to help your students better understand and cope with such issues as teen pregnancy, suicide, AIDS, censorship, and violence? Upcoming CBS-TV "Schoolbreak Specials" can spark informative classroom discussions.

The CBS television network's "Schoolbreak Specials" series has garnered a number of awards for its dramas addressing conflicts and problems facing teenagers. Each program is developed in conjunction with educators, psychologists, religious leaders, and other specialists.

The study guide at right is designed to help you make the best classroom use of the next four specials. Additional programs will air on March 15, March 29, April 19, and May 31. A guide to those, including an expanded version of the guide at right, has been mailed to junior and senior high schools and libraries nationwide. For extra copies, contact your local CBS affiliate or write to CBS Educational and Community Services, 51 W. 52nd St., New York, NY 10019.

"Schoolbreak Specials" are broadcast Tuesdays from 4 to 5 p.m. ET; check local listings for exact dates and times in your area. An asterisk after the name of a show means it's a CBS/Library of Congress "Read More About It" project. Each show is closed-captioned for hearing-impaired viewers.

This study guide was produced for the CBS/Broadcast Group by KIDSNET, Washington, D.C. Permission granted to copy for classroom use.

Babies Having Babies *Dec. 15, 1987*

Grade level: 7-12

CBS-TV

Subject areas: Health education, home economics, social studies, language arts.

Synopsis: While waiting at a community center for their teen pregnancy counselor to arrive, five girls discuss their problems. What emerges is a frank view of teen sexuality and the agonizing questions facing every pregnant girl. Although the girls are from different backgrounds, they share common needs and fears—and when they learn that one of them is not really pregnant but just researching an article for a school newspaper, they feel betrayed. But they come to realize that an article written from their point of view will be helpful to others.

Suggested discussions:

► The girls in this drama agree that they have been ill-informed and unprepared for sexual activity. What counseling resources are available in your school or community? To what extent are they used? Should sex education be part of the school curriculum or left to families?

► The boys in this story are portrayed as insensitive and uncaring. What might cause them to be this way? What should be the boys' responsibility in relationships such as those described by the five girls?

Hear Me Cry *Dec. 29, 1987*

Grade level: 9-12

CBS-TV

Subject areas: Family life, home economics, language arts, social studies, psychology.

Synopsis: Two 16-year-old boys—one bright, handsome, and funny, the other a serious, straight-A student—appear to have great futures in store. But both are unhappy. The first feels pressured to live up to his parents' standards and blames himself for the death of an older brother. The other thinks his divorced and newly remarried father no longer loves him. Both boys give off signals that their depression is cause for concern: withdrawing from friends, writing about suicide, giving away prized possessions.

Suggested activities:

► Look in the film for visible clues to the boys' suicidal thoughts. How might other people have helped them? What other options did David and Craig have?

► Experts believe that the suicidal impulse is transitory and, with help, can be averted. What sources of help for troubled teens are available in your school and community? Make a list of the various ways young people might pull themselves out of depression. Which of these are the most constructive?

Never Say Goodbye* *Jan. 12, 1988*

Grade Level: 6-12

Subject Areas: Social studies, language arts, psychology, visual arts, dramatics.

Synopsis: A family's emotional strengths, weaknesses, and differences are put to the test when one member suffers a severe stroke and is declared brain dead. The others must decide whether or not to keep her alive by artificial means. The 14-year-old granddaughter of the patient finds the situation especially difficult.

Suggested discussions and activities:

► What does Mo mean when she says, "When you love something, you have to be willing to let it go?" How does the scene where Emma frees Emily Dickinson—the hawk she has nursed to health—symbolize her acceptance of Mo's death? How does Emma's father's letting go help other family members make the critical decision? Why is it important to the father to have his children's approval for discontinuing the life-support machines? Would this be handled in the same way by most families you know? Ask students to create an original short story about "letting go."

► Emma writes to her sister, "Do you know how much I love you? Do you know I have cried for you? And if so, do you care?" Why does she choose poetry to express her inner feelings? Why didn't Patti know the poem was addressed to her and not a boyfriend? Explore nonverbal ways—like facial expressions and moodiness—used in the film to express inner feelings of the four family members. What reactions can different types of expression elicit from others?

An Enemy Among Us* *Jan. 26, 1988*

Grade Level: 7-12

CBS-TV

Subject areas: Language arts, social studies, civics, health, the arts.

Synoposis: Scott Fisher, a 16-year-old who has everything going for him, has his life turned topsy-turvy when he learns that the donor who supplied him with blood three years earlier has died of AIDS. Medical tests confirm the presence of the HIV antibody in Scott's blood, and he's forced to deal with the fact that his life and his family will never be the same. Adding to his problems are strong emotional reactions from the community. An epidemiologist visits Scott's classroom to lead a candid discussion about AIDS.

Suggested discussions and activities:

► Ask students to watch for factual information about AIDS in the film and record each piece of data as they hear or see it. After viewing, discuss this data. Make a chart demonstrating how the AIDS virus incubates and spreads. As a supplementary activity, let students use their own methods—poetry, song, videotape, etc.—to convey facts about AIDS.

► What questions about AIDS are not conclusively answered in the film? What questions concern you most? In what ways will you change your behavior as a result of having seen this film?

Sign Up for Free Viewers' Guides

Would you like to receive complimentary viewers' guides to future broadcasts appropriate for K-12 students? In cooperation with the television industry and KIDSNET (the national computerized clearinghouse for children's TV and radio), NEA is now compiling a mailing list of Association members interested in receiving these guides as they become available.

If you're not on the list but would like to be, please send your name, curriculum area, grade, and mailing address to Viewers' Guide, NEA Communications, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

Teachers Urged To Apply for 'TV Worth Teaching' Awards

K-12 teachers who use commercial television as a constructive classroom resource may compete for one of three CBS "Television Worth Teaching" awards. Each winner will receive a $1,000 savings bond, and his or her school will receive video production equipment for classroom use. This year's competition will focus on projects that teach citizenship in a democracy.

For entry forms and more information, write to Television Worth Teaching Awards, CBS Educational and Community Services, 51 W. 52nd St., New York, NY 10019.

PHOTO ESSAY

Mustang Island, Texas

Above: Teacher Myrl Bishop rides the 7:30 a.m. ferry from the mainland to Port Aransas High on the island. Left: Industrial technologies teacher Bill McIntire helps students restore a boat keel. Below: Journalism teacher Rita Reed with The Splash *student newspaper staffers. One mile wide and 15 miles long, Mustang (a Gulf Coast island near Corpus Christi) has only 2,000 full-time residents, but in the spring as many as 200,000 vacationers—primarily college students—descend.*

Mustang Island photos © Dennis Dunleavy

ISLAND

Teachers, students thrive i

Santa Catalina, C

Avalon School teachers (from left) Karen Hall, Mel Swingrover, and Karen McKay with Avalon Harbor in the background. The school (right), with nearly 400 K-12 students and 19 teachers, is part of the Long Beach school district. Catalina's prime attractions are its resort facilities (including a casino) and glass-bottomed boat tours of the marine gardens. Because of its terrain and vegetation, the island is sometimes used as a movie location. As an old song said, Catalina is about "26 miles across the sea" from the California mainland.

Santa Catalina

PHOTO ESSAY

SCHOOLS

settings of idyllic beauty.

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hotos by Bob Riha, Jr.

Left: Off to Two Harbors Elementary on the Catalina isthmus go teacher Aileen Earl-Wood and some of her 15 students, ages 5 to 11. Their $75,000 one-room school, opened last September, was donated by a Long Beach businessman. Previously isthmus children journeyed 25 miles over a bumpy mountain road to Avalon School. Right: Earl-Wood and kids scavenging for seashells.

Mackinac Island, Mich.

Mackinac Island photos by John Stommzand

Top: A ferry view of Mackinac Island, located just east of the Mackinac Bridge that connects Michigan's Upper and Lower Peninsulas. Kindergarten teacher Annette Bloswick (above) and first and second grade teacher Vicki Urman (below) review lessons with their students. Lower left: Recess time on the shore of the Straits of Mackinac. Mackinac Island is a very popular vacation destination; the governor and other celebrities have summer homes here. The island has retained its timeless charm through its architecture and a way of life that includes a ban on motor vehicles (except snowmobiles). That leaves the 550 full-time residents to travel by horsedrawn carriage, bicycle, or foot. Mackinac Island Public School has 11 teachers—all Association members—and 100 students, though enrollment drops during the coldest months, when some families retreat to the mainland.

SAY

ISLAND SCHOOLS

Teachers, students thrive i settings of idyllic beauty.

Santa Catalina, Calif.

Avalon School teachers (from left) Karen Hall, Mel Swingrover, and Karen McKay with Avalon Harbor in the background. The school (right), with nearly 400 K-12 students and 19 teachers, is part of the Long Beach school district. Catalina's prime attractions are its resort facilities (including a casino) and glass-bottomed boat tours of the marine gardens. Because of its terrain and vegetation, the island is sometimes used as a movie location. As an old song said, Catalina is about "26 miles across the sea" from the California mainland.

Santa Catalina Is

PHOTO ESSA

Photos by Bob Riha, Jr.

Left: Off to Two Harbors Elementary on the Catalina isthmus go teacher Aileen Earl-Wood and some of her 15 students, ages 5 to 11. Their $75,000 one-room school, opened last September, was donated by a Long Beach businessman. Previously isthmus children journeyed 25 miles over a bumpy mountain road to Avalon School. Right: Earl-Wood and kids scavenging for seashells.

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GWU Special
Collections

Watch the mail for your catalog in late-January!

EXPAND YOUR HORIZONS WITH NEA TRAVEL

Book your next vacation with NEA Travel and receive a free Polaroid camera to take along!

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FREE* POLAROID SPIRIT 600 INSTANT CAMERA FOR BOOKINGS MADE BY MARCH 15, 1988.

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Vacations at Home

Maybe you'd prefer to see America first. We offer vacations from New England to Hawaii. From Alaska to Florida. And if you plan to attend the 1988 NEA Convention in New Orleans, look for the convention logo in the catalog for vacations that coincide with convention dates.

Cruises

Have you ever sailed? The ships are luxurious, the accommodations excellent, the food superb, the entertainment fun, and it's all included in the price. Even airfare from your city may be included! On many lines, children under 12 travel at significant discounts, which makes a cruise an ideal family vacation. NEA Travel has a myriad of cruises to choose from that include some of the most exciting and stimulating places on earth: Mexico, Alaska, Bermuda, The Caribbean, Hawaii and The South Pacific. Land excursions are available for those interested in visiting the ports of call. Of course, if you prefer to relax around the ship's swimming pool or exercise in the gym, that's okay, too.

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The 1988 NEA Travel catalog that you'll receive in late-January will provide convenient toll-free phone numbers, specific details on NEA Travel opportunities and other information to help you make your travel plans and reservations.

Your next great vacation starts with a free phone call to NEA Travel. And once you book with NEA Travel—you can relax. That's how all great vacations begin!

*Limited to two cameras per cabin on cruise bookings.

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Mail to: **NEA Travel Special Services Response Center**
51 Monroe Street, Suite 200
Rockville, MD 20850-9965

INTERNATIONAL

Turmoil in Central America: What's in It for Your Class?

Students hear a lot about Central America these days—but much of the news is more confusing than informative. By sifting and researching what's really going on, students can get not only well-grounded viewpoints but some good exercise in critical thinking.

Almost every evening, in millions of homes across the United States, the TV news highlights events in the handful of countries south of the border called Central America.

Those news reports talk of war, torture, murder—even sometimes of efforts to establish peace. They talk of Congress and scandals and taxpayers' dollars.

Many students watch these reports, and many of these students—like many adults—have little idea of what Central America is all about. Many people don't even know where Central American nations are.

Teachers trying to close this "knowledge gap" in their classes face some formidable obstacles. Most textbooks are sketchy on Central American history and hopelessly outdated on current events.

But today, all over the United States, teachers are working to overcome these obstacles. They're filling in the gaps in curriculum and materials. Studying the situation, perhaps even visiting the region, they're translating their knowledge into curriculum units and source materials for themselves and their colleagues. And their work is paying off, in student learning and their own professional satisfaction.

When Karen Miller set out to earn a history credit for her certification, she signed up for a one-semester course in Latin American history. That course led the Portland, Oregon, U.S. history teacher on a physical journey to Central America as well as a professional journey in curriculum development.

"The course left me shocked and angry," Miller says. "I'd never studied the history of Central America. I never knew about the things the U.S. had done there, the number of times we'd invaded. I wondered why that was left out of all the textbooks."

Miller did some reading on the subject, but, she says, "there was too much conflicting information." So in 1984, with 13 other teachers, she went to Nicaragua on a tour organized by a local college.

On her return, Miller found a group of teachers developing materials on Central America. She began giving her sixth graders Central and South American music and food, and a little Spanish. Then the class would role-play a Central American family.

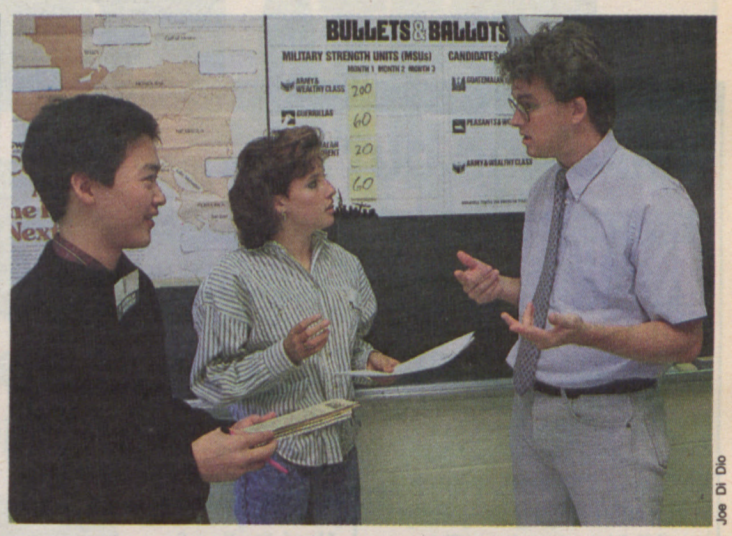
"They played out what it was like to live under a dictator such as the one the Nicaraguans overthrew in 1979," Miller recalls. "They didn't like it. So they rebelled, threw the dictator out, and wrote a constitution. We'd been studying the U.S. Constitution, so they had plenty of ideas. Then we compared it with the constitution the Nicaraguans wrote.

"We studied all viewpoints," Miller says. "I want my students to look at the whole picture so that when they see the news they can analyze it."

This year Miller teaches eighth grade U.S. history, giving her students background on regions in the news and their relations with the U.S. When it comes to Central America, she'll have some special help. Students at two Portland high schools have raised money to bring two Nicaraguan high school students and a teacher to stay with families, visit classes, and meet with city, school, and Association officials.

"We've had no trouble with parents, even when I was teaching in a small town on the coast," Miller reports. "I talk with parents a lot, and they know we're teaching their kids to think critically and analyze situations."

In the Washington, D.C, suburb of Rockville, Md., social studies teacher Jim Mogge also is working to help students think for themselves about Central America.



Joe Di Dio

Maryland social studies teacher Jim Mogge and 11th graders Chan Park and Christy Hernandez go over a point in "Bullets and Ballots," a simulation of the situation in Guatemala.

"Parents like the Central America unit because their kids develop an expertise," says Mogge, who teaches at Richard Montgomery High School. "Parents love to have intelligent conversations with their kids. And the kids know I'm going to be as fair as possible. It's not academically honest to present just one side of an issue."

Mogge's interest in Central America began several years ago, when he organized an all-day social studies conference for his school's tenth grade social studies and eleventh grade world history students along with some 250 students from nearby high schools. The topic was Central America.

The seminar began with a debate on foreign policy between a local member of Congress and a representative from the State Department. After lunch each student had time to attend three out of 10 seminars, and the day concluded with a student debate on the issues.

Since that year, the all-day seminars have continued, addressing other issues. But that first seminar whetted Mogge's interest in Central America. Since then, he's read more and more about the area, and he's begun teaching about it in his regular courses.

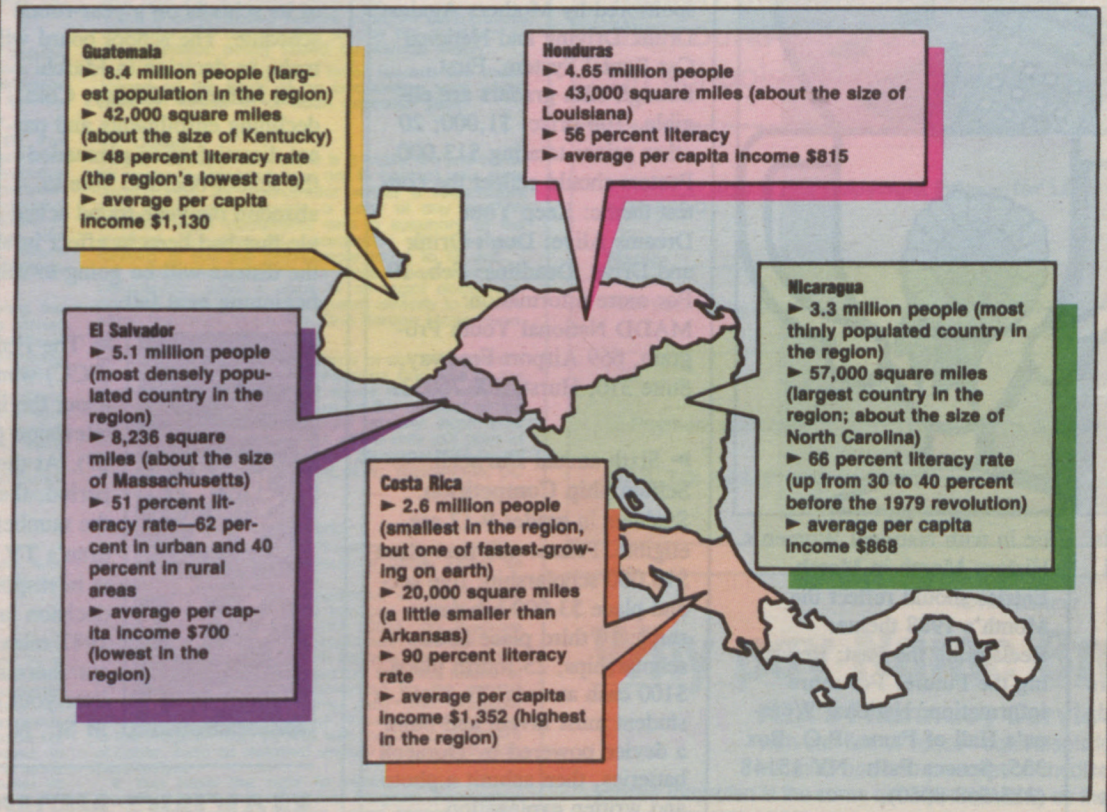
In his world history course, Mogge starts with the characteristics that distinguish Central America as a region. Teams of students then research the economic, political, and social characteristics that distinguish each country within the region.

Then, because each of the countries has had a revolution against a colonial power and often another revolution in recent years, the class studies the features that each revolution shares with the French revolution, the Russian revolution, even the English civil war.

Events in Central America are confusing and troubling to many people in our country. But students are at an advantage in understanding the situation: teachers can help them fill in the background, learn to identify what information is reliable, and distinguish which of conflicting claims makes sense.

In the classroom, what may begin as an attempt to confront a welter of allegations and justifications can end as a very practical exercise in historical research, political analysis, and logical thought.

—Jane Power


Guatemala
► 8.4 million people (largest population in the region)
► 42,000 square miles (about the size of Kentucky)
► 48 percent literacy rate (the region's lowest rate)
► average per capita income $1,130
Honduras
► 4.65 million people
► 43,000 square miles (about the size of Louisiana)
► 56 percent literacy
► average per capita income $815
El Salvador
► 5.1 million people (most densely populated country in the region)
► 8,236 square miles (about the size of Massachusetts)
► 51 percent literacy rate—62 percent in urban and 40 percent in rural areas
► average per capita income $700 (lowest in the region)
Nicaragua
► 3.3 million people (most thinly populated country in the region)
► 57,000 square miles (largest country in the region; about the size of North Carolina)
► 66 percent literacy rate (up from 30 to 40 percent before the 1979 revolution)
► average per capita income $868
Costa Rica
► 2.6 million people (smallest in the region, but one of fastest-growing on earth)
► 20,000 square miles (a little smaller than Arkansas)
► 90 percent literacy rate
► average per capita income $1,352 (highest in the region)

Central America: Resources for North Americans

Print

Central America: What Are the Alternatives? Pamphlet. U.S. State Department, Bureau of Public Affairs, 2201 C St., N.W., Washington, DC 20520. Single Copies free.

Directory of Central America Classroom Resources, K-12. Central America Resource Center, 1701 University Avenue, Southeast, Minneapolis, MN 55414. 612/379-8799. 1987, 135 pp., $9.95.

Of Secret Wars and Roses. Dinorah Sandoval. High school student's prize-winning short story about a teenage Salvadoran refugee in the U.S. Los Angeles Teachers Committee on Central America. P.O. Box 10626, Burbank, CA 91510. 24 pp., teaching guide 41 pp. $10.

Opposing Viewpoints pamphlets on Central America. *Why Is the U.S. Involved in Central America? Is U.S. Involvement in Central America Justified? Why Is Central America a Conflict Area? Is Communism a Threat in Central America? Is Peace Possible in Central America?* Greenhaven Press, 577 Shoreview Park Road, St. Paul, MN 55126. $1.95 each.

Wilfredo, the Story of a Boy from El Salvador. In large print with pictures, Wilfredo tells the story of his life in El Salvador and in the United States. Student edition, 1986, bilingual, 32 pp. Teachers edition, 1987, English with bilingual comprehension questions. Los Angeles Teachers' Committee on Central America (see address at left). $10.

Audiovisual

Children of Nicaragua. Slide show. Grades K-5. Central America Resource Center (see address at left). $10 to rent, $100 to buy.

Face to Face. Videotape, 30 min. U.S. teenagers visit Nicaragua and get to know Nicaraguan students and their country. Gail Dolgin, Electric Shadow Productions, 553 Mendocino Ave., Santa Rosa, CA 95401. 415/540-0507. $20 to rent, $35 to buy.

Network

Network of Educators' Committees on Central America, P.O. Box 43509, Washington, DC 20010-9509 (202/667-2618). Curriculum materials, workshops, sister schools, school supplies support, tours, emergency response network. Newsletter subscription, $5. Teaching packet on Nicaragua—exercises, fact sheets, poetry, resource list—$8.

Your NEA

REACHING OUT

Attention, Teachers Of Grades 5-7

Would your students like to write to their counterparts in China? Here's their chance.

Random House and the Chinese Children's Publishing House in Beijing are jointly publishing *American-Chinese Pen Pals*, a book full of letters from American and Chinese youngsters about whatever has touched them most deeply. Students whose letters are selected to appear in the book will receive complimentary copies of both the English and Chinese editions.

For entry forms and more information, write to Pen Pal Project, attn. Sherry Gerstein, Random House Books for Young Readers/6-1, 201 E. 50th St., New York, NY 10022.

Apply Now for a Carr Grant

Need funding for a classroom project? A Carr grant may be the answer.

Association members and members of the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession (WCOTP) are eligible to apply. To be considered for a Carr grant—worth up to $2,500—projects must benefit students directly, demonstrate an understanding of world issues as they relate to students' lives and studies, and lend themselves to dissemination. Filing deadline for 1988 grants is February 1.

For more details contact the Carr Grants Program, National Foundation for the Improvement of Education, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

Coming: School Nurse Day

Wednesday, Jan. 27, is School Nurse Day—a day set aside each year to salute the nation's 23,000 school nurses. For suggestions about ways to observe the day, contact the National Association of School Nurses, Inc., P.O. Box 1300, Scarborough, ME 04074 (207/883-2117). □

Contests Beckon Talented Students

Nomination forms for the 1988 All-Academic Team should be landing in high school principals' mailboxes in January.

This annual competition—begun last year and sponsored by NEA, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and *USA Today*—seeks to identify the nation's best all-around high school students.

Deadline for nominations is March 1. Final selection will be made in April by a panel of nationally prominent educators. *USA Today* will publish the names of members of the first, second, and third teams in a feature story in mid-May—and will bring the 20 members of the first team to Washington, D.C., shortly thereafter.

For further information contact Pat Ordovensky, *USA Today*, Box 500, Washington, DC 20044.

Our mailbox is bulging with requests from other contest sponsors asking us to alert NEA members to their student competitions. Here are a few of the more interesting contests with winter or spring deadlines:

► Seventh annual **poster and essay contest** sponsored by the National Women's Hall of Fame, Inc. Students in grades 4-12 are eligible; prizes of $100 and $50 will go to 12 winners. The contest runs from Feb. 1 to March 15, to tie in with National Women's History Month in March. Entries should reflect the Month's 1988 theme: Reclaiming the Past; Rewriting the Future. For more information: National Women's Hall of Fame, P.O. Box 335, Seneca Falls, NY 13148 (315/568-8060).

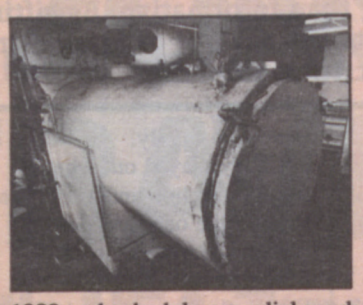
► *Time* Education Program's annual high school **writing contest**. Top prize: $5,000 college scholarship; other prizes: 17 scholarships totaling over $15,000. Entrants may write on one of four categories corresponding to sections in *Time* magazine—world, nation, economy & business, or ethics—or produce artwork in one of three categories—political cartoon, maps and charts, or *Time* cover design. Deadline: March 1. For further information: *Time* Education Program, 10 N. Main St., Yardley, PA 19067 (800/523-8727; in Pennsylvania, 800/637-8509; in Hawaii and Alaska, 215/493-1221 collect).

► **Poster and essay contest** sponsored by Mothers Against Drunk Driving and National Car Rental System. First through 12th graders are eligible. Top prize: $1,000; 20 other prizes totaling $13,000. Posters should reflect the contest theme: Keep Your Dreams Alive: Don't Drink and Drive. Deadline: Feb. 19. For more information: MADD National Youth Program, 669 Airport Freeway, Suite 310, Hurst, TX 76053.

► Sixth annual **Duracell Scholarship Competition**. Students in grades 9-12 are eligible. Prizes: one first place $10,000 scholarship; five second place $3,000 scholarships; 10 third place $500 scholarships; 25 fourth place $100 cash awards. To enter, a student must invent and build a device powered by Duracell batteries, then submit a photo and written explanation. Deadline: Feb. 8. For more information: Jim Donahue, Duracell U.S.A., Berkshire Industrial Park, Bethel, CT 06801 (203/796-4654).

► Fourth annual **calendar contest** sponsored by Missouri's St. Louis Association for Gifted Education. Kindergartners through ninth graders are eligible to enter poems or drawings (black and white on 8½ x 11" paper). Prizes: books. Entry deadline: April 30. Entries must indicate whether they're intended as calendar covers or for a particular month. For more information: Betty Smith, 511 Antioch Lane, Ballwin, MO 63011. □

LOOKING BACK



► In October the federal Environmental Protection Agency released a set of new regulations to help rid schools of asbestos hazards ("NEA Pressure Helps Free Asbestos Funds," May 1987). The rules require school districts to—

- Inspect all schools for hazardous asbestos by October 1988 and schedule remedial work to begin by July 1989.
- Reinspect for any new evidence of asbestos contamination every three years.
- Hire certified inspectors, not uncertified school employees as some districts have done in the past.
- Follow standards for reoccupancy of school buildings after asbestos cleanup projects.

► Two of the nation's largest school districts recently revisited the issue of year-round schooling ("Debate," Nov. 1987). The Los Angeles Unified District—where 90 out of 600 schools are open year-round—will hold four months of public hearings on the feasibility of putting more, or all, of its schools on a year-round schedule. The school board will make its decision in March.

In Jefferson County, Colo., declining enrollments and parent dissatisfaction persuaded the school board to vote to abandon the year-round schedule that had been in effect in all schools since 1977. Students in the district will be going to school on a September–June schedule beginning next fall.

► The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) wants to know how the public feels about the issue of commercials on children's television programming ("Tube Time," Oct. 87). At the end of a designated response period, the FCC will decide whether to limit the number of commercials appearing on children's TV shows. The call for public reaction is in response to a federal appeals court decision last June that questioned the FCC's 1983 relaxation of all rules regarding TV commercials on children's programs. To register your comments, write to the FCC at 1919 M St., N.W., Washington, DC 20554. □

MAKING NEWS

NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell thanks the United Negro College Fund, Inc., for honoring her with one of its five 1987 Distinguished Leadership Awards. Futrell received the honor at the group's Seventh Annual Salute to Leadership Dinner, held in late October in Washington, D.C. The Fund has, for generations, served as a fiscal buttress for the historically Black colleges.

CLIP AND SAVE

The following contains important information about your rights to EEL Program benefits as provided under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).

PROTECTING YOU FROM LIABILITY

As an NEA member, you're insured against loss of up to $1 million if you're ever sued in connection with your work. NEA's liability program offers these coverages: civil negligence, $1,000,000; civil rights violation, $250,000; criminal charge (if exonerated), $25,000 for attorneys' fees; bail bond, $1,000; property damage, $250.

NEA Educators Employment Liability Program Summary Plan Description

I. INTRODUCTION
The purpose of this summary is to inform NEA members about the structure and principal provisions of the 1987-88 NEA Educators Employment Liability Program, referred to as the "EEL Program." Please remember that this is only a summary. If there is any conflict or inconsistency between this summary and the underlying contracts and documents, the contracts and documents must be controlling.

The "EEL Program" is an insurance plan designed to protect you, as an NEA member, against financial liabilities incurred as a result of certain kinds of accidents occurring in the course of your employment, including certain costs of providing a legal defense to you for claims against you.

The Program is administered by NEA and its state affiliates and is underwritten by the Horace Mann Insurance Company. The entire premium for the plan is paid by NEA.

This summary is being furnished in compliance with the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA). As participants in the EEL Program, you are entitled to certain rights and protections under ERISA. These rights are summarized in Part VIII of this summary.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION
PLAN NAME/SPONSOR: The Plan is generally known as the NEA Educators Employment Liability Program ("EEL Program"), and is sponsored for NEA members by the National Education Association of the United States (NEA), 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

TYPE OF PLAN/IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS: The EEL Program is a welfare plan providing accident liability insurance and reimbursement for attorney fees and court costs. NEA has been assigned identification number 530115260 by the Internal Revenue Service. NEA has assigned NUMBER 523 to this Plan.

ADMINISTRATION/PLAN ADMINISTRATOR: The EEL Program is administered by NEA pursuant to resolutions adopted by its Board of Directors and Executive Committee and pursuant to agreements between Horace Mann and NEA. Communications concerning any aspect of the Program should be addressed to Educators Employment Liability Program, c/o NEA Legal Services, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036. The telephone number is (202)822-7080.

SERVICE OF PROCESS: If legal action involving the Program is necessary, legal process may be served upon the Plan Administrator. The agent for service of legal process is Lynn Ohman, c/o NEA Legal Services, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

TRUSTEES/COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT: Since all assets of the Program consist of insurance contracts and funds held by a licensed insurance company, there is no trust under the Program and there are no trustees. In addition, the EEL Program has not been established and is not being maintained pursuant to the terms of any collective bargaining agreement with any employer.

III. ELIGIBILITY
MEMBERS: All active, life, educational support, substitute, retired life, and student NEA members are automatically covered by the EEL Program.

IV. COVERAGE
ACCIDENT LIABILITY: Under the EEL Program, you are entitled to reimbursement for damages, up to a maximum of $1,000,000, and legal expenses incurred to defend you, as a result of certain "accidents" which occur in the course of your employment. An "accident" is an act which inflicts damages to someone other than yourself. The phrase "course of employment" means while you are engaged in activity which was undertaken pursuant to the terms of the employment contract or at the request or approval of your supervisor. (Coverage A)

EXCLUSIONS: You are not covered if the suit against you is—
- brought by another employee of an educational unit;
- based upon liability which you have expressly assumed under any contract or agreement;
- seeking solely declaratory, injunctive, and/or similar nonmonetary relief;
- alleging any violation of the criminal law, except civil damages arising out of your use of corporal punishment.

Certain activities are also excluded from coverage under the EEL Program, such as:
- rendering of medical or similar services except by licensed school nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapists, psychological therapists, or guidance counselors, or on an emergency basis by nonmedically certificated members;
- a publication or utterance of defamatory statements;
- ownership, maintenance, operation, use, loading, or unloading of any vehicles except:
  1) driver training instructors who are riding as passengers in the course of their work;
  2) vocational education instructors engaged in teaching shop; and
  3) members supervising students entering or exiting a school bus.
- misuse of public and/or private funds;
- sale of food products or other goods manufactured by or under your supervision—except for home economics teachers and cafeteria workers, who are covered;
- use of firearms, except when physically restraining a student who is threatening others with firearms.

These are the major exclusions under this Program. Please consult the certificate of insurance for further details.

LEGAL AND DEFENSE FEES: You will be reimbursed for the following:
- Up to a maximum of $25,000 per occurrence for attorney's fees and expenses incurred in the defense of any criminal proceeding arising out of your employment except if the proceeding arises out of an action against another employee. Unless the proceeding results from your use of corporal punishment, you must be exonerated in order to receive reimbursement. (Coverage B)
- Up to $1,000 for bail bond premium as the result of an event occurring during your employment. (Coverage C)

ASSAULT-RELATED PERSONAL PROPERTY DAMAGE: You will be paid up to $250 for the damage or destruction of your own property or property in your custody if you are assaulted at school or while engaged in an authorized school activity. Such damages must exceed coverage provided by any homeowner's policy, and there will be no coverage for damage or destruction of a vehicle of any kind or for any property owned, leased or rented by an educational unit. (Coverage D)

V. TERMINATION OF COVERAGE
Coverage under the EEL Program will be terminated or reduced under the following circumstances: If you cease to be an NEA member, or if NEA decides to discontinue the EEL Program as a whole. Termination will not affect amounts due for claims arising prior to termination.

VI. CONTRIBUTIONS
SOURCE/AMOUNT/MEDIUM: NEA pays the entire cost of the EEL Program. The amount is determined by the NEA and the insurance company.

This is an unfunded welfare plan. All contributions made by NEA are applied to pay the premium on the insurance policy issued by Horace Mann.

PLAN YEAR: The Program's fiscal records are maintained on the basis of an accounting year which ends on August 31 of each calendar year.

VII. CLAIMS
INITIAL PROCEDURES: If there is a claim for any benefits under the Program, you are to contact your state association's EEL coordinator within a reasonable time period and provide a copy of any and all relevant legal documents and a summary of the incident. The state EEL coordinator will thereupon forward to you the appropriate forms to fill out.

If unable to contact your state association's EEL coordinator, send a copy of all legal documents and the description of the events directly to Horace Mann Insurance Company, One Horace Mann Plaza, Springfield, IL 62715.

REVIEW OF DENIED CLAIMS: If you or any other person making a claim under the Program and NEA or the insurance company do not agree that benefits are payable, or do not agree as to the amount of the benefits payable, you should clearly state your objection(s) in a letter to NEA within sixty (60) days of the event. Write to Lynn Ohman, Manager, NEA Legal Services, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

VIII. YOUR RIGHTS UNDER ERISA
As a participant in the EEL Program, you are entitled to certain rights and protections under ERISA, as follows:
- You have the right to examine, without charge, at the offices of NEA Legal Services, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036, all Program documents, including the insurance contract (with riders and amendments) with Horace Mann and the pertinent resolutions adopted by the NEA Board of Directors and Executive Committee for the administration of the Program. You may also examine, without charge, copies of all documents pertaining to the Program filed by NEA with the U.S. Department of Labor, such as detailed annual reports and plan descriptions.
- You have the right to obtain copies of all Program documents and other Program information upon written request to NEA Legal Services at the above address. NEA Legal Services may make a reasonable charge for the copies.
- You are entitled to summary financial reports for the year ending August 31, 1988, when they become available.

In addition to creating rights for you, ERISA imposes duties on NEA and Horace Mann in its operation of the EEL Program. NEA is a "fiduciary." It has a duty to operate the Program prudently and in your interest. No one can prevent you from obtaining the insurance benefits to which you are properly entitled under the Program or from exercising your rights under ERISA. If your claim for a benefit is denied in whole or in part, you must receive a written explanation from Horace Mann for the denial. You have the right to have Horace Mann review and reconsider your claims. Under ERISA, there are steps you can take to enforce your rights. For instance, if you request Program materials to which you are entitled under ERISA and do not receive them within 30 days, you may file suit in federal court. In such a case, the court may require NEA to provide the materials and pay you up to $100 a day until you receive the materials, unless the materials were not sent because of reasons beyond NEA's control. If you have a claim for benefits which is denied or ignored, in whole or in part, you may file suit in a state or federal court. If it should happen that Program fiduciaries misuse the Program's money, or if you are discriminated against for asserting your rights, you may seek assistance from the U.S. Department of Labor, or file suit in federal court. The court will decide who will pay court costs and legal fees. If you are successful, the court may order the person you have sued to pay these costs and fees. If you lose, the court may order you to pay these costs and fees, for example, if it finds your claim frivolous. If you have any questions about the EEL Program, contact NEA Legal Services. If you have any questions about this statement or about your rights under ERISA, contact the nearest Area Office of the U.S. Labor Management Services Administration, Department of Labor. □

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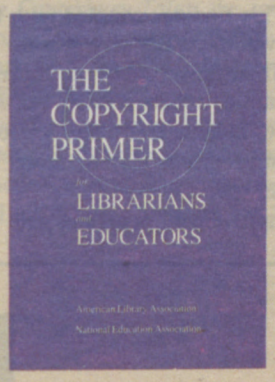

This joint publication of NEA and the American Library Association is exactly what you've been looking for! It gives answers to the most frequently asked questions and provides an immediate quick reference on fair use, classroom photocopying, sheet music, videotapes, and off-air taping. Separate sections are also provided on computer software, infringement and remedies, and how to obtain permission. This monograph provides accurate and reliable information on how the 1978 law has been tested in the courts and how the results have direct impact on schools. 64 pp. 1987

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RESEARCH CLUES

School Improvement Meets Urban High—It's a Draw

by Robert McNergney and Martin Haberman

The last decade has seen the rise of a body of research seeking to identify the characteristics of effective schools—schools where students score higher than predicted on standardized tests in basic skills areas.

The attributes that correlate with school effectiveness are now generally agreed upon and well known. They include a strong principal, high teacher expectations, parental involvement, a no-nonsense school atmosphere, and regular testing.

This effective schools research is increasingly being used by both state and school district policy makers seeking to implement education reform at the building level through the establishment of school improvement programs (SIPs).

School improvement programs generally seek to improve student attendance and behavior as well as achievement. They involve a written plan, staff consensus on school goals, and—quite frequently—a school improvement committee. An estimated one-third of all public high schools now have some form of SIP in place.

What does an analysis of these high school SIPs reveal? A recent study by three researchers at the Wisconsin Center for Education Research uses data from a survey of over 20,000 public high schools to analyze the impact of SIPs.

There is disagreement between researchers and reformers about whether SIPs provide building staff (teachers and principals) with increased self-determination and accountability—or merely mask the dumping of responsibility on the local school, without the concomitant power.

What *is* known is that about half the school improvement programs in this study were initiated by forces outside the individual school building (the school board, local administration, or state education department). About 43 percent of the SIPs were developed by building principals.

In over 52 percent of the schools in which the building principal said there was an improvement plan in operation, more than half the teachers did not perceive one! This finding, coupled with the question of whether SIPs give school building staff sufficient power to make changes to improve their school, led the researchers to believe that many school improvement programs may be more cosmetic than real.

School improvement programs are concentrated in urban schools, schools that serve more minority and at-risk students, and schools generally characterized as problem schools. In analyzing the data, the researchers found little difference between urban high schools with and without school improvement programs in terms of the impact felt by students and staff.

Principals of urban schools with improvement programs reported a greater *number* of changes in their schools—such as grouping students by academic need and increasing homework policies. But, the researchers report, the urban SIP schools do *not* have more staff collaboration, higher expectations for students, greater attention to discipline, more staff participation in decision making, or greater support for innovation than do comparable schools without SIPs.

In fact, the researchers state, having a school improvement program seems to result in higher quality inservice programs—and not much else. At present, therefore, researchers cautiously conclude that having a comprehensive plan for school improvement—at least one imposed from the outside or the top—has little or no effect.

This will no doubt be a shock in more than 20 states where school improvement programs are part of the state strategy for education reform—assuming, of course, that those who make state policy read any research. □

Read More About It

For more details on this research, read "U.S. High School Improvement Programs: A Profile from the High School and Beyond Supplemental Survey," by Stewart C. Purkey, Robert A. Rutter, and Fred M. Newman, in *Metropolitan Education*, vol. 3 (1986), pp. 59-91.

Robert McNergney is associate professor at the Curry School of Education, University of Virginia; Martin Haberman is professor at the School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. They prepared this column for NEA Today *with the cooperation of the American Educational Research Association.*

Readers, Tell Us How You'd Spend $500

If you were given $500 for "professional development," what would you do with it? Pay for that special college course you've always felt would help you teach better? Buy a set of reference books for your class? Travel to another city to attend a concert, take in a play, or tour a new museum?

Whatever your choice, we'd like to hear about it—in 400 words or less. We'll tally all responses and publish the results of this informal reader poll in the April 1988 *NEA Today*.

Please mail your letter or postcard to Professional Development Poll, *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036, no later than Feb. 1. □

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READER POLL RESULTS

NEA Members Say Positive Reinforcement Is Best Motivator

The September 1987 issue of *NEA Today* asked readers how they motivate students. Association members from 31 states took the time to respond.

The most popular motivation method? Positive reinforcement: providing students with self-confidence, encouragement, and love.

McCree Harris of Monroe Comprehensive School in Albany, Ga., gave a typical response. Harris says she expresses love for her students by complimenting them, showing an interest in their after-school activities, and gently touching them on the back and assuring them that all will be well when they're depressed.

Claudine Carlton, science chair at Oberlin (Ohio) High School, shows her students she cares about them by writing personal notes to each about their extracurricular activities and academic achievements. If Carlton is grading a test at home and finds that a student has done particularly well, she'll call that student's parents then and there to share her excitement with them. If Carlton must send a negative report home, she follows up with a positive report at the first opportunity.

Bob Habes, sixth grade teacher at McWayne School in Batavia, Ill., sometimes waits until a student is out of the classroom, then tells the class about something good the student has done. When classmates relay the message, the student gets double reinforcement and then works hard in class to show Habes that the compliment was passed along.

The next most popular way to motivate students, according to poll respondents, is by using games.

Patti Freeder, English and journalism teacher at Coventry High School in Akron—and Ohio's 1986 Teacher of the Year—uses flashcards, bingo games, and prizes to teach her students vocabulary words.

Freeder also centers vocabulary lessons around school activities like Homecoming Week. When her class studies *The Canterbury Tales,* the room is adorned with pencil drawings of all the characters, done by a former art teacher.

Diane Bennett, a vocational office education teacher at Mt. Juliet (Tenn.) Senior High School, gives her students practical experience when teaching payroll techniques. Students are "hired" into the "company" for a fictitious salary and have an opportunity to earn "raises," "overtime," and "bonuses" for designated extra activities. At the end of each work week, students calculate their own gross pay, overtime pay, and net pay, using current tax charts, and deposit their checks with the student banker.

Another popular motivation technique is acting out character roles, particularly in history and English classes.

Milt Diggins, an eighth grade teacher at Perryville (Md.) Middle School, starts his American history unit by speaking first as a disgruntled colonial, then as a member of the British Parliament. As the year progresses, Diggins divides his class into Northerners and Southerners and has them argue and exchange letters on issues of the 1860s: tariff, nullification, slavery, the Dred Scott decision, the election of Lincoln. By the time the Civil War has begun, the students are immersed in the attitudes and feelings of the era.

Among the more unusual responses to the *NEA Today* motivation survey: Craig Burgess, a Spanish teacher at Cherry Hill (N.J.) High School, asks his students to name their favorite songs, then translates the lyrics into Spanish. The class sings both the English and Spanish versions. This technique works, Burgess notes, because students use references from their lives outside the classroom and because the teacher participates in the learning process.

William Garry, a math supervisor at Hackettstown (N.J.) Middle School, guarantees a final grade of *C* to any student who completes all homework on time and retakes and passes any test for which a grade of *D* or *F* was given.

Janet Obrzut, New Brunswick (N.J.) 1987 Teacher of the Year, finds that taking the time to get to know her students at the beginning of the year (by playing "getting to know you" games and having all students draw posters about some aspect of their individuality) makes all the difference in their attitudes toward learning. Obrzut also teaches them time management techniques.

What works to motivate a particular student or class doesn't necessarily work for everyone, NEA members realize. Our informal poll showed once again that good teachers apply motivational techniques tailored carefully to their students.

—Diane Dismuke

Need More Tips On Student Motivation?

NEA's Professional Library offers a kit on student motivation, containing a practical guide, six filmstrips, eight audiocassettes, a book, 25 leaflets on how parents can help, reproducible workshop masters with a teacher's manual, an audiocassette on motivation and adolescents (with discussion questions), and a guide for planning in-service/pre-service workshops.

To order this comprehensive kit at a special $199.27 price, contact the NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516 (203/934-2669), specifying stock no. 0750-6-60-D. Items in the kit may also be ordered separately.

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People

Annette Cootes

Elizabeth and **Luis Canales,** who teach physical education in the Rio Grande Valley town of Mission, Texas, met when Luis signed up for Elizabeth's Mexican folk dance class at nearby Pan American University.

"First I got interested in dance," Luis explains, "then I got interested in the instructor."

Now the Canales, members of the Rio Grande Valley unit of NEA/TSTA, direct a Mexican *folklorico* troupe of 70 local children aged 5 to 17.

When the Canales set up the troupe, which is backed by the city recreation department, Mexican folk dance hadn't been done in the Valley in years.

"Now Anglo as well as Mexican American children come into our group," Luis explains, "and I've just started a class at Mission High School."

Elizabeth Canales, who teaches at Pearson Elementary, recalls learning about Mexican folk dance from watching a Mexican TV station on Saturday mornings.

"Now we bring in instructors from the different Mexican states," Elizabeth says. "The children learn their dances and perform for audiences in Texas—and in Mexico, too.

"Parents want their children involved," Elizabeth notes. "Performing builds up children's self-esteem—and being in the group helps their schoolwork, because they must have good grades to stay in." □

Minnesota junior high social studies teacher **Bob Marcotte** spent two weeks in South Africa this past August because he wanted firsthand knowledge of apartheid.

Marcotte, a 25-year teaching veteran, was the guest of Hamilton Dlamlenze, executive director of the African Teachers Association of South Africa. He visited schools in Soweto, a segregated township outside Johannesburg.

"The elementary schools are well cared for," Marcotte reports, "but there is no electricity. Some classes have as many as 70 students. Average class size is 56."

Marcotte visited high schools with broken windows, trash everywhere, and more kids outside than inside the building.

The students, he found, share a sense of hopelessness, some believing there's no reason for them to try to learn. "What difference will it make?" one student asked Marcotte.

Trying to talk with people on the street was depressing, Marcotte adds. Many Blacks refused to talk with him because they weren't sure he was trustworthy.

"I found some South African whites who pretend sympathy for Blacks but argue that Blacks are uneducated and not ready for freedom," Marcotte says. "They admit that relationships with Blacks need to improve, but they aren't willing to give up the privileges they maintain under apartheid."

Marcotte, who teaches at Jackson Junior High in the Anoka-Hennepin district, plans to share his South African experiences with students statewide through a curriculum unit he's developing. □

Larry Selzman

Martha Wade

School employees in Madison Parish, La., are singing the blues about teachers' problems—and singing country, rock, and spirituals as well.

Instead of letting classroom difficulties get them down, the Madison Parish Western Swingers bring down the house when their mostly teacher audiences hear their combinations of familiar tunes with fresh lyrics about familiar situations.

Performing at conferences, universities, and even a candlelight vigil against state budget cuts, the Swingers are familiar from Oklahoma to Texas, as well as across Louisiana.

"*I went to the governor to ask for a raise,*" they sing, "*'cause I'm busted. I hate to beg, but I gotta these days....*" Or "*Lunch money won't balance and pictures are due, collect for the program—just a dollar or two. Always more money—if I can be frank, sometimes I feel like a teller in the bank.*"

The Swingers always end their program with "Thank God for Kids," which sums up what makes them overlook frustrations and lack of appreciation—and which invariably draws a standing ovation from audiences who know as well as the Swingers do what makes a person teach and keep on teaching.

Pictured are, from left, sixth grade teacher **Dorothy Edward**, kindergarten teacher (and lyricist) **Linda Williamson**, reading assistant **Detra Griffin**, adaptive physical education teacher **Billie Jean Avery**, reading assistant **Diane Cagnolatti**, sixth grade teacher (and lyricist) **Patty Watts**, kindergarten teacher **Melonie Meeks**, district attorney **Buddy Caldwell** (guitar accompanist), sixth grade teacher **Lou Ann Thompson**, and music and reading teacher **Patricia Buchanan**. Not shown are media center coordinator **James Griffin, Jr.** (the group's sound engineer), elementary education supervisor **Valerie Kimbell** (manager and moderator), media center aide **Willie Kline** (equipment handler), and reading assistant **Ann Thomas**. □

Baldwin Park has become a curriculum of its own—"a course of study combining math, English, history, geography, and vocational skills," reports **Bill Powers**, an English and social studies teacher at Jim Beckwourth High School in Portola, Calif.

The ambitious project began last year when Powers decided that developing a park—on 4.8 acres of city land that had sat idle for nearly 30 years—would be a good way to use cooperative learning at Beckwourth as well as to strengthen ties between the school and its neighborhood.

"Beckwourth is a small school for students who've had difficulty adapting to regular school," Powers explains. "The park project has forged a much-needed bond between the school and the community."

The students involved are gaining skills in land use planning, public speaking, land clearing, construction—and grant application writing. With the support of Portola's mayor, they won a grant of $25,000 from the city for developing the park.

Baldwin Park, parts of which are already open, will eventually include picnic, play, and sports areas and an exercise trail.

Julie Rice and Kirsten Woods, seen above working on the park with Powers, wrote an essay about the project, saying that for Beckwourth students the planning of Baldwin Park "means a chance to gain trust and approval from the people of our community." For some of the students, they added, this is the first time in their lives that they've ever "felt a sense of teamwork and accomplishment." □

Two years ago, the soccer team at Sanderson High in Raleigh, N.C., racked up its 66th consecutive game without a loss, setting a new U.S. record for the sport at the high school level. But coach **Bob Catapano** and his team didn't stop there. They went on to extend their no-loss streak to five years and 103 games before a defeat this past September finally brought the string of victories to an end.

Between September 1982 and September 1987 the team won 96 games and tied 7. Catapano's record for 11 years of coaching soccer at Sanderson: 182 wins, 11 ties, 9 losses.

Catapano—who also teaches math—attributes the record-setting play to his team's talent and dedication. Most of the players keep up their soccer year-round, continuing with local teams after the September-November high school season ends.

Becoming the new record holder was a competition in itself. "Thomas Jefferson High in Auburn, Wash., also broke the old record two years ago," explains Catapano, "and we've been topping each other for the last couple of seasons." The Auburn team ended its no-loss record last year at 94 games. □

For Ron Narzisi's seventh graders at South Mountain Middle School in Allentown, Pa., global education starts right on the school's own grounds.

With *litter*. To bring home some of the more global environmental issues, Narzisi gets his students to focus on one intractable environmental problem: trash. By the time they've analyzed and cataloged the types of school litter, they're ready to move to the world level and tackle acid rain, deforestation, flooding, the greenhouse effect, population explosion, and oil spills.

"After just the five days that we devote to studying the campus litter problem," says Narzisi, "I notice a significant change in the frequency of littering and a new awareness of the need for greater care of the environment."

Narzisi's unorthodox approach recently earned him an innovative teaching award from the Pennsylvania State Education Association. □

"If it hadn't been for the Association, I wouldn't have been able to stay in teaching after losing my sight," says Lakewood, Colo., first grade teacher **Marge West**.

With the help of the Jefferson County Education Association, West returned to her classroom at Glennon Elementary School this fall though she is legally blind.

An 18-year-veteran in the district, West suffers from retinitis pigmentosa, a disease that gradually erodes peripheral vision, ending in complete blindness.

The photo shows West with a first grader who is wearing goggles that let him see exactly what she sees.

"Starting a couple of years ago, my UniServ representative accompanied me through all the steps I had to take to decide how I would earn a living when I could no longer see," West recalls. "We met with officials from the school district and from rehabilitation agencies. It became obvious that it would be easier for me to continue as a classroom teacher than to switch to a desk job, though I did offer to get retrained."

When West examined the legal aspects of her situation, she concluded that she was "handicapped" rather than "disabled." That meant she would fall under §504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, which requires agencies receiving federal funds to make "reasonable accommodation" for persons with handicaps unless doing so would cause undue financial hardship.

Jefferson County school officials showed a real spirit of support and cooperation, West notes. "The district has provided me with a full-time aide who takes care of activities that require mobility, such as working with small groups or taking the children out of the room."

West's seeing-eye dog, Rush, spends the day in the classroom with her and escorts her back and forth to school from her nearby apartment. □

YOU AND YOUR RETIREMENT

Retirees: Special Services Still Valuable

More than a million times last year, NEA members took advantage of the insurance and other programs offered by NEA Special Services. Association members clearly appreciate the quality and value they get from these programs. Ever wonder how your retirement might affect your Special Services benefits?

What follows is a program-by-program explanation of the major nationally sponsored NEA Special Services programs—and how they might be affected by your retirement.

"Can I keep my NEA life and accidental death and dismemberment insurances after I retire?" The Special Services Response Center frequently gets that question. The answer? Your coverage is unaffected if you become a member of NEA-Retired.

Another common question at the Response Center concerns whether or not retirees can buy additional coverage. For many years, buying extra coverage wasn't an option. Now it is. As an NEA-R member you're free to apply for new coverage or upgrade your existing coverage, just like everyone else.

Yet another question: What happens if an insured person chooses not to join NEA-R? A nonmember may either allow the coverage to lapse or convert to one of several individual policies that Prudential offers. An individual policy is more expensive and often doesn't provide the same features. You can call the Prudential Insurance Company's NEA Operations Center toll free, 1/800/523-5877, to get more information.

Many members assume they'll automatically lose their DUES-TAB coverage once they retire. It's true that as a retiree you no longer accrue no-cost insurance benefits, but as an NEA-R member you can purchase your accumulated coverage on a guaranteed-issue basis.

This means you can keep the DUES-TAB coverage you've earned without regard to your present health status—and without paying anything more than the regular NEA life insurance contributions. But you must notify the NEA Members Insurance Trust of your intentions within 60 days of joining NEA-R and no later than November 1 of the next membership year.

Retirement is a good time to review your present health insurance status. In most cases, retirees don't have the same level of health insurance coverage they enjoyed while they were working. Fortunately, NEA sponsors a group of supplemental health insurance plans in most states that can help "customize" existing coverage to meet special needs.

You should especially consider one of these MemberCare plans—the Medicare Supplement—if you're nearing retirement and will be counting on Medicare. The Association designed this plan to handle many of the medical expenses Medicare doesn't cover.

Each MemberCare plan imposes age restrictions on those who apply for new coverage. That's why NEA-R gives new members 90 days in which these age restrictions are relaxed. During this 90-day period, many new members who might not otherwise qualify can enroll. All necessary information is sent to each new NEA-R member.

Disability insurance protects your income if you're unable to work because of illness or injury. It isn't very relevant when you're drawing a pension, so if you have such insurance, look into terminating it after retirement.

Similarly, once you retire, you'll no longer have a salary to shelter in a tax-deferred annuity. But you may want to "annuitize" your retirement savings. Check with your state Association to find out what annuities are available and how they interact with your retirement system.

Your age and membership status will never affect your ability to save money through the many Special Services discount programs. The only change is that you'll find these programs even more valuable after retirement. NEA's discount program combines low prices on prescription, nonprescription, and vitamin products with the convenience of shopping by mail. The NEA Book Program and the Unified Magazine Service, meanwhile, enable you to save money on leisure reading materials. And the NEA Travel Program offers a full selection of vacation opportunities.

NEA programs to help you manage your finances—such as the Unified Credit Card and Unified Credit Plan (loan-by-mail)—remain available to retirees. And you'll still need the consumer information your Association provides. NEA-R members can always draw upon the many consumer publications that Special Services produces.

NEA-R life members also receive a series of handbooks designed to help them ease the transition to retirement and make sure they get the most for their money.

Remember, you must be an NEA-R member to enjoy any Special Services program after you retire. For more information about the Special Services benefits you find important, write to the NEA Special Services Response Center, 51 Monroe St., Suite 200, Rockville, MD 20850. You can also call toll free: 1/800/637-4636 weekdays between 8 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. ET.

—Marian Clayton

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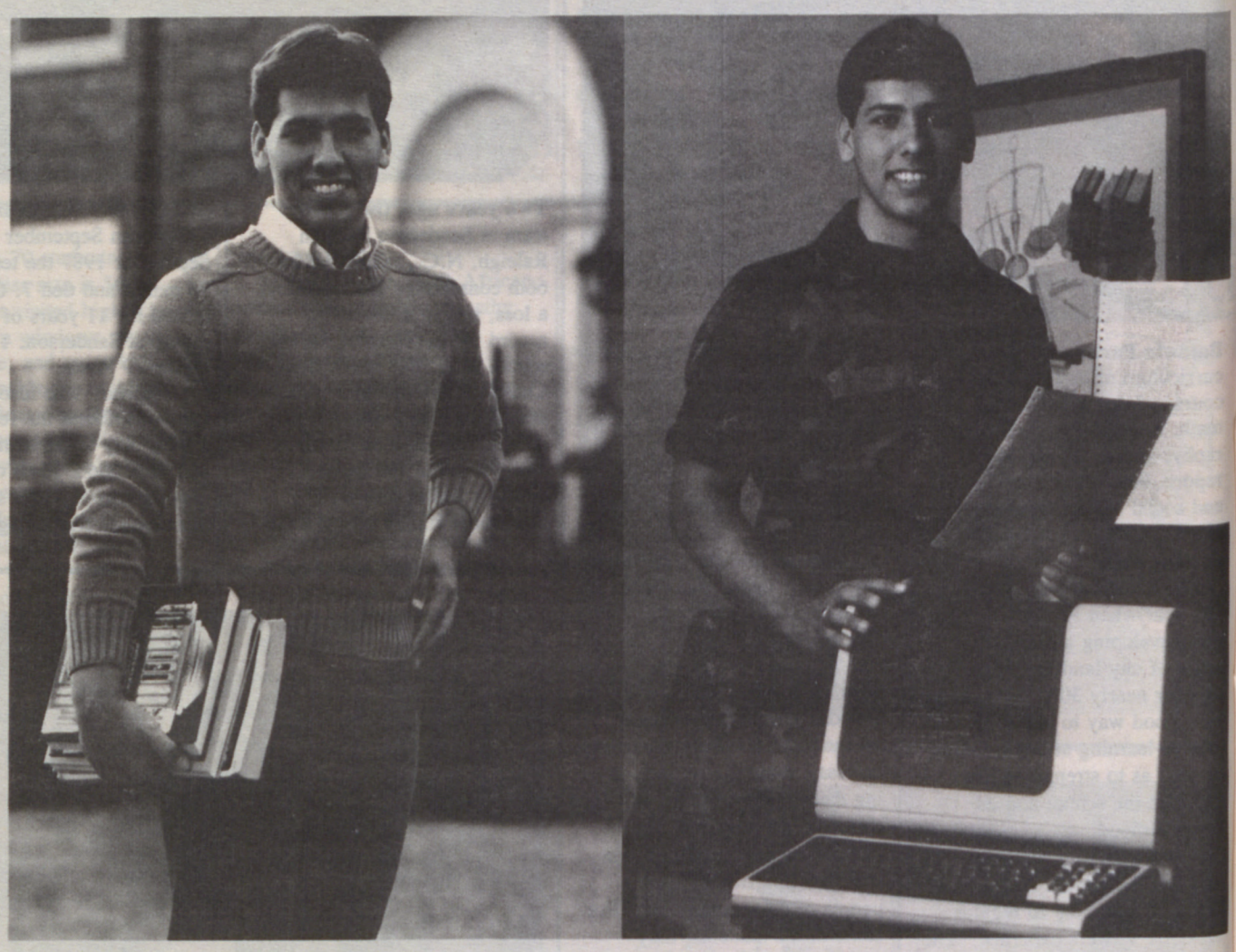

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Young people who are doing all they can for our country deserve the opportunity to do all they can for themselves.

That's what ACES is all about. The Army Continuing Education System offers a variety of programs through which soldiers can get tuition assistance, credit for independent study, management and vocational training, even the opportunity to learn foreign languages.

It all starts with the counseling every soldier receives soon after joining the Army. At the Army Education Center on post, soldiers learn about ACES programs and determine which are best suited for their educational and career goals. ACES counselors are available to advise soldiers throughout their Army careers.

Your students can work toward college degrees while they're in the Army. Through ACES, they can take college courses right on post or at a nearby campus. Soldiers may enroll in programs that will enable them to transfer college credits back to "home schools" if they are transferred. These programs can lead to vocational/technical certificates, and Associate, Baccalaureate and Masters degrees.

Your students can find out more about ACES from their local Army Recruiter, who's listed in the Yellow Pages. Experience has taught us that the more our soldiers can learn, the better it makes the Army.

ARMY. BE ALL YOU CAN BE.

PERSONALLY SPEAKING

'TIS THE SEASON TO GO SHOPPING

Successful holiday gift shopping requires you to be part mind reader, part bargain hunter, and part savvy consumer. Here are some timely tips on smart buying, gathered from consumer experts on several of this year's hot "giftables."

COMPUTERS

It's a mistake to buy a computer, computer software, or peripherals for anyone else unless you're absolutely sure of compatibility with their present equipment. Instead, consider giving a computer gift certificate or cash, or one of the following "safe" items:

► *Storage disks.* No one ever has enough, computer wizards agree. Even here, though, you need to know the computer make and model.

► *Dust covers.* Household dust is a big enemy of keyboards, printers, and disk drives. If you're handy with a needle, you could even sew your own dust cover, but be sure to use lint-free material! □

CAMERAS

The National Association of Photography Equipment Technicians offers two suggestions:

► *Don't overbuy.* No one needs a $700 camera to capture a memory. Consider the recipient's skill level. In most cases simple disk cameras are fine. If you want to spend more, include film, a photography book, or a carrying case.

► *Don't throw away the warranty and receipt.* Most people don't want to advertise how much they spent on a gift, but if there's a problem with the camera, the recipient will need proof of purchase to get warranty work done. Consider mailing the warranty card before you wrap the gift, and keeping the receipt yourself. Tell the person who's getting the camera that you have this information. (Also, before you buy, be sure the warranty is good in the U.S. and that the serial numbers on the warranty match those on the camera.) □

TIME

Gifts don't have to be expensive to be valuable. One thing everyone needs is more time. For a unique present, try giving a "coupon" redeemable for some service. Be sure to make the terms of your gift very clear—you're not volunteering to be a slave!

You might promise to make and deliver a certain number of casseroles on specific dates. Or agree to take a young couple's children on an all-day outing or arrange a sleepover, so they can have time alone. Do you know people who have difficulty getting around? Offer to shop for their bulk items once a month.

Big household jobs like window washing or garage cleaning go faster and are more fun if you have help. Specify a day when you'll come over and help with a tough chore. □

ELECTRONICS

Almost all consumer electronics are imported, and the dollar has dropped in value overseas. So should you wait for the dollar to come back up before buying a stereo or TV? No, say industry watchers. Manufacturers haven't raised their prices enough to compensate for the weak dollar because they don't want to lose market share. When the dollar gets stronger, they'll probably leave prices where they are now, to make up for lost earnings.

► *Stereo systems.* You no longer have to buy individual components to get good sound. Unless you're extremely fussy, buying a complete stereo is cheaper and easier than mixing and matching components. And consider the portable "boom box" if you're buying a stereo for a dorm room or small apartment.

► *Compact disc players.* CD player prices seem to have gone as low as possible. Future improvements will be in the form of size (smaller) and features (more). If all you want is good sound, now is a good time to buy.

Only a few companies make the parts used in all compact disc players—and the parts all use virtually the same circuitry. As a result, even the editor of a top audiophile magazine admits (anonymously) that all CD players sound the same to the average person. Nor is there a big difference in reliability between brands. Make your purchasing decision, therefore, on features and price.

A new technology called Digital Audio Tape (DAT) promises CD quality on mini-cassettes. Should you wait? Probably not. Stereo experts agree it will be several years before the prices of DAT machines and tapes are close to the price of CD players—if ever.

► *Video cassette recorders.* Like CD players, VCR prices have just about reached bottom, so there's no reason to wait any longer. Picture quality is very similar from model to model, so competition is mostly in terms of features.

► *Pocket televisions.* Even though pocket TVs have not yet proven they meet any real need, they're a very hot item this year. Their screens can be as small as 2", and some are even available in color. Before you buy a pocket TV as a gift, be sure to check the quality of the picture and decide whether you think it's acceptable. □

BUSINESS CASES

Anyone who works or goes to school needs to carry papers, books, files—and sometimes lunch, so a fashionable and functional business case is always a welcome gift. The Luggage and Leather Goods Information Bureau offers these tips:

► *Construction.* If the case is the rigid kind, twist it slightly to be sure it doesn't wobble from side to side. If it's a soft variety, check that the bottom is reinforced so it won't sag when full.

► *Handles.* Should be comfortable, yet firm enough to keep their shape. When in doubt, choose a slightly harder handle, since it will soften with use.

► *Edges.* For a leather case, rub your finger across the edges to make sure the leather doesn't separate and the color doesn't rub off.

► *Balance.* Except for underarm styles, briefcases should stand up by themselves.

► *Partitions and pockets.* Are they big enough? Look for inserts that can hold stitches—chipboard or paper will tear loose.

► *Hardware.* Zippers should work smoothly and not catch on linings. Solid brass or die-cast locks are best. An attache case lid or briefbag case should stay locked in the open position when you want it to. □

INCOME TAX

THIS IS THE YEAR IT ALL CHANGES

DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS? WE HAVE ANSWERS!

For the answers to all your questions about the Tax Reform Act of 1986, and how it affects you this year *and in future years*, get your copy of:

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Federal Income Tax Guide
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(1988 Guide for 1987 Taxes)

STARTING FROM SCRATCH

For years, thousands of educators have been using the *NEA Federal Income Tax Guide* to help them pay the lowest tax allowed by law. This year, with the whole system changed, you need the kind of expert, sensible, easily accessible information John C. Arch gives in this perennial favorite. You'll get information as general as The New Rates (both '87s and '88s)...to the intricacies of deductible/nonductible travel expenses. Here are some of the changes you will need to be aware of as you file your 1987 return:

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You'll get explanations and suggestions *you can understand* as well as examples illustrating the applications...several different ways, if necessary... to ensure you the best guide for wading through your federal tax forms.

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SOUNDING BOARD

We CAN Stop Student Drug Abuse

by Gary P. Parnham

...but only if we involve the right people.

After two decades of experience, schools are still wrestling with the problem of substance abuse by school-age youth. The age of "first try" grows younger and younger, yet we seem to have long passed the point of being shocked. Why isn't there a solution to this problem?

As a teacher who coordinates substance abuse prevention programs in my Portsmouth, N.H., school district, I get this question every day—from members of the press, concerned parents, administrators, other teachers. Why, they ask, can't we stop kids from abusing drugs?

I believe we can, but there are a couple of reasons why we haven't, so far. First, we've done some of the right things, but we've done them separately when we should have done them together. Second, we haven't enlisted the most effective agents in our effort, namely other students.

Let's look at the antidrug approaches schools have taken since the late 1960s.

► *The informational approach.* Here we spelled out the pharmacological effects of drugs.

► *The scare-'em-to-death approach.* When that didn't work, we showed very graphically the worst possible things drugs could ever do to anyone.

► *The reformed addict approach.* Then we brought in ex-druggies to serve as role models. We had them describe the depths to which they fell while addicted, but also show the possibility of recovering from addiction.

► *The self-esteem approach.* Finally, we helped kids understand that anyone with a reasonable amount of self-respect would not let him- or herself be conned into using drugs.

Anyone who was a student or teacher in schools when these programs were tried will remember that they didn't work for long. Instead we ended up with young people who are (a) well-informed about the recreational possibilities of drugs; (b) convinced of their own immunity from harmful drug effects (teenagers, after all, see themselves as immortal); (c) certain of their ability to stop using drugs any time they want (haven't they seen reformed addicts with their own eyes?); and (d) feeling good about themselves at the same time they're using drugs.

While these antidrug approaches didn't work by themselves, they *will* work if they're incorporated into a single program. But we must also add two missing ingredients: the community, including parents, and other students trained as peer leaders.

Here is how one such "incorporative" program, delivered by teens, works in my district. We call it Project R.E.A.C.H. (Restoring Esteem And Changing Habits). We developed it around two basic strategies.

First, organize the community. When substance abuse programs fail, it's usually for lack of community support. To obtain the necessary support, I invited 50 local "important people" to a luncheon. I told them their ideas were crucial to the design of any anti-substance abuse program. I meant it.

From this group, I gathered a list of concerned citizens. They are the nucleus of my community support. I stay in touch with them through a regular newsletter.

The value of such citizen supporters becomes apparent when you need help. A friend of mine who runs a substance abuse prevention program in Lee, Mass., tells about the day the skating rink melted during a winter carnival her group sponsored. As soon as the word got out, a citizen supporter sent horse-drawn hay wagons to provide a substitute activity.

The second thing to do is to involve students. It's kids themselves who will make it cool to not use addictive substances. Select and train groups of student leaders to work with other students who may be using drugs—or who may be tempted to use them.

Then stand back and let the peer leaders problem-solve, plan, and implement a program and sell it to the target audience. Which isn't necessarily limited to kids.

Recently, my high school peer leaders developed a "parents night" program to demonstrate to adults effective ways of communicating with teens. In two 50-minute periods, the kids designed a three-hour presentation that included video skits, ice breakers, and communication exercises.

Another time, their target audience may be students who have just entered high school. The peer leaders have designed a button they'll wear for the first two or three weeks of school in September. The button, which says "PAL" for "peers as leaders," designates the wearer as "safe." Newcomers will know they can ask students with buttons to tell them where kids can hang out without getting into trouble. Or the button wearers may sit down with loners in the cafeteria.

A question that comes up at this point is, what teacher or counselor has the time for all this? Implementing a peer leadership program requires time from a staff adviser.

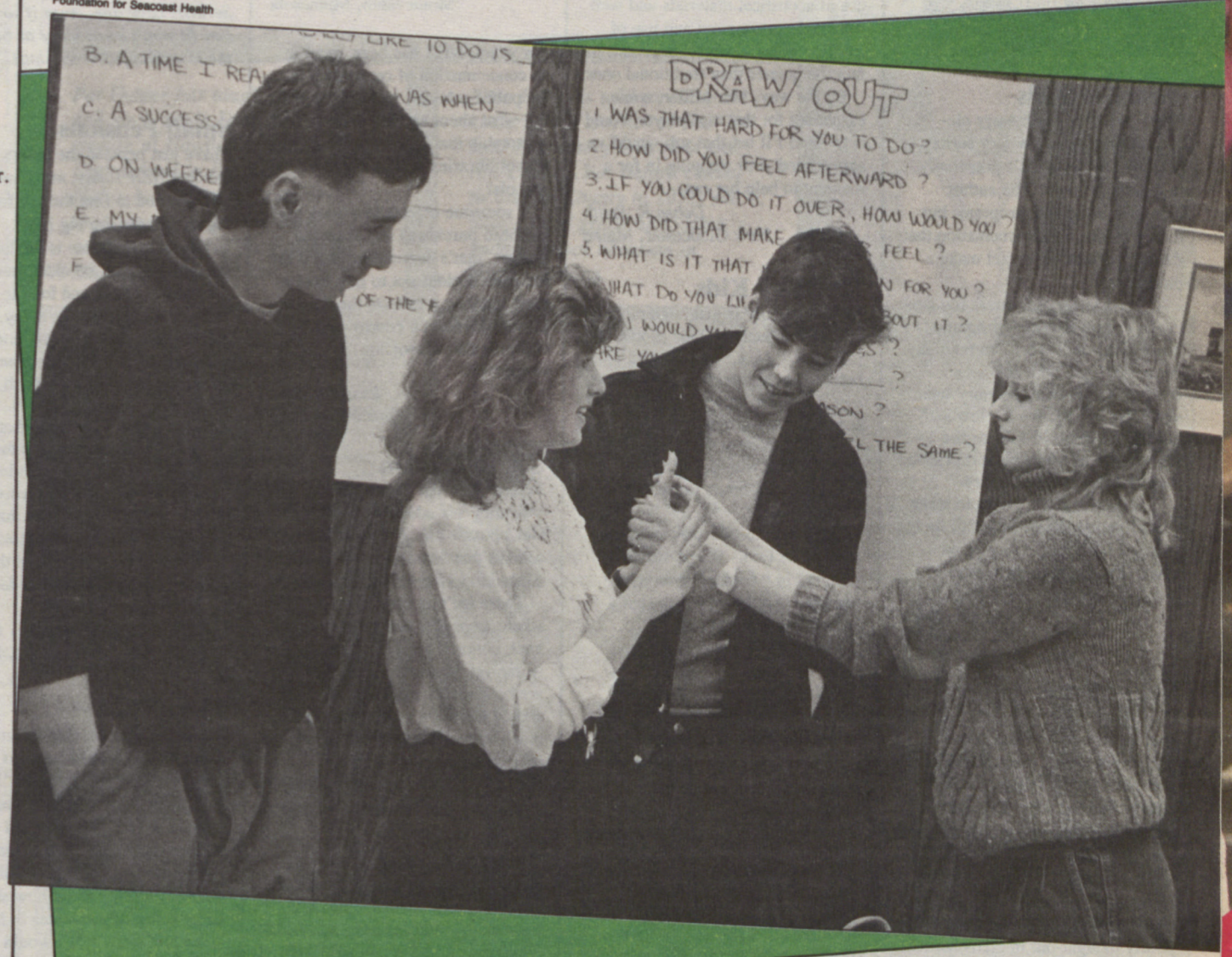
But there's another dimension of time in this discussion. It's *time* for school boards and administrators in every district to create the position of coordinator of substance abuse prevention programs. It's *time* for communities to put forth an honest effort to fund such programs. We are fortunate that in Portsmouth, the school system is making such a commitment.

Is it expensive? Yes, but there are sources of money other than the school budget. I've found many foundations—local, state, and national—that will fund innovative substance abuse programs. Also, it's far more cost-effective for a state to pay for prevention than for treatment.

How do you get started? I got started after learning about the "school team" approach developed by the U.S. Department of Education. I sat down and applied for a grant to establish a coordinator position in my district.

You say you don't know how to write a grant application? Neither did I. Get a book from the library. That's how I got my first $60,000. Onward.

Foundation for Seacoast Health


DRAW OUT
1. WAS THAT HARD FOR YOU TO DO?
2. HOW DID YOU FEEL AFTERWARD?
3. IF YOU COULD DO IT OVER, HOW WOULD YOU?
4. HOW DID THAT MAKE
5. WHAT IS IT THAT

Portsmouth, N.H., students (from left) Kim Olsen, Lori Courchene, Trevor Bartlett, and Chris Canard practice a nonverbal communication exercise as part of peer leadership program designed to prevent substance abuse.

Gary Parnham is coordinator of substance abuse programs for the Portsmouth (N.H.) public schools. A former biology teacher, he also teaches a "Skills for Living" class at Portsmouth Senior High School and is an active member of the Association of Portsmouth Teachers and NEA–New Hampshire.

Letters

Troubled Kids

The November cover story eloquently addresses the very serious problems of America's potentially throw-away youth. The author describes three new programs but then provides no documentation that these programs do in fact make a difference.

Unfortunately, educators too frequently jump into new programs, hoping they will work, without any evidence that the model can succeed. Missing from the story were strategies to improve the low self-concept of troubled kids or the importance of teachers who practice student-affirming behaviors.

Your statistics on births to teens should be corrected. In 1985, there were 477,705 births to women under 20, with pregnancies estimated at more than a million.

Marilyn Steele
Flint, Michigan

Year-Round Schools

One of our elementary schools has just begun a year-round program after much public discussion. The November *NEA Today* "Debate" clearly showed what will make the difference between success and failure: administration.

The situation described by the Los Angeles debater is not the fault of the year-round concept but of its poorly thought-out implementation. The Utah debater's example has obviously been carefully planned with consideration to the needs of families and faculty.

An informative debate would have compared a healthy year-round school with a healthy traditional school. Nonethless, the California-Utah debate provides a very useful "nonexample."

Gwynn Pealer
Ocala, Florida

Classroom Crossfire

I was delighted to find Kenneth Miller's assessment of open classrooms ("Sounding Board," Nov.). I've never taught in an open classroom and continue to be thankful that I've never been required to operate in such an unnatural setting.

For years, parents have been advised to provide a quiet study area for their children who have homework assignments. Then they are required to send these same children into what Miller aptly describes as "auditory crossfire."

Gertrude H. Overton
Pontiac, Michigan

Teaching as if one were in a separate classroom is incompatible with the open environment. The blame lies not with the building, nor with the teachers, but in the fact that teachers receive no training in using the physical environment to support educational goals, and no training in nontraditional models of teaching.

Open plan schools work well if they're well designed (including acoustics!), if administrators are committed to the concept, and if faculty receive initial training and ongoing support in using the physical environment to best advantage. Noise is not a problem. With proper use of acoustical materials and well designed arrangement and use of learning areas, open schools can, in fact, be quieter than traditional ones.

By the way, Mr. Miller, some earphones for that tape player would help—and I'll bet that sub would've appreciated your stepping in for a moment to help her out.

Debra R. Smith
New Gloucester, Maine

Latchkey Kids

My community is just beginning to discuss the latchkey kids problem ("Trends," Nov.). A proposal before our state legislature outlines a plan to allow daycare providers to care for two additional school-children, but on school days only. The children would still be left alone for long hours on school holidays.

I consider this an inadequate proposal. The Louis Harris survey reported in "Trends" showed the need for "not just daycare, but a complete support system."

I urgently request people who know of successful latchkey programs to write to me. I need information in order to make our state delegates realize that the proposed stopgap measure will not appreciably help the families involved.

Dee Krasnansky
1601 Terrace Drive
Westminster, MD 21157

Censorship

Thank you for the excellent October cover story on the censorship controversy in Lolo, Mont. Among the most frightening aspects of the situation are the inordinate influence exerted by citizens who have no children in the public schools and the direct attack on an Association leader's employment.

On the other hand, we Montanans have been inspired. In Lolo, professional commitment, teacher rights advocacy, political action, and community organizing converged to precipitate a change. This is a classic example of the Association at its best.

Terry Browning, President
Great Falls (Montana)
Education Association

How dare we as professionals take such a "two-faced" approach to the involvement of parents in their children's education?

Many times I have heard teachers complain about parents' lack of interest. Yet when one parent or a group of parents attempts to exercise parental authority over the material a child reads, we hear the word *censorship*. We urge parents to volunteer in classrooms, help with field trips, and attend conferences, yet refuse them the right to voice disapproval of the literature their children are told to read.

Perhaps more thoughtful planning on the part of many teachers would eliminate problems. I can personally testify to the many, many classic pieces of literature that I was never exposed to in school. I wonder why any teacher needs to fill out a reading list with books that are questionable when there is so much of quality that many children will never encounter.

Connie Hansen
Montevideo, Minnesota

For years, NEA has been vocal in its condemnation of censorship in the public schools, and rightly so. But what about another form of censorship that is often seen in our school libraries, especially in high schools?

If someone objects to a book that has been purchased and is on the shelves, that's censorship. But if the librarian decides not to purchase a book because it reflects the "unpopular" side of a controversy, no one calls that censorship, since no one knows.

Russell Broten
Phoenix, Arizona

Sex Education

Teresa Foreman's comments regarding sex education ("Debate," Oct.) puzzle me. Are there really schools that do not need to teach sex education to their students?

There isn't an area in the country where teenagers can't become pregnant, contract a venereal disease, or worse yet, contract AIDS. There are no students anywhere who should not learn and understand as much as possible about these current problems in our society.

Anthony Orlando
Bloomfield, New Jersey

Somebody should say it: the track record of our sex education efforts so far is pretty dismal. Teen and subteen pregnancies have increased. Venereal disease is epidemic. Worst of all, "too much, too soon" is affecting our kids for life.

We owe it to our youngsters to include some philosophy along with the cold, clinical facts in our curriculums. Students should know the pitfalls of casual sex. Not having early sex experience doesn't make one an oddball. Good physical and mental health is aided when we control our bodies.

Benjamin Erb
Woodland, California

Social Security

The October "Personally Speaking" column referred to teachers' moonlighting so they can earn Social Security credits for retirement. You may wish to research this further, due to the fact that in 1977 (effective 1982), the Social Security laws changed. Anyone receiving a government, public, or state pension is no longer qualified to receive the full Social Security benefit but a reduced amount depending on the "other" pension he or she receives. In addition, the wife or husband no longer qualifies for the spouse's portion of Social Security if he or she receives a pension.

In my opinion, these changes tend to remove the incentive for teachers to moonlight or to retire early and work a second job—or even for both members of a married couple to work. Why place funds into the Social Security system that you'll never realize? This is money lost forever.

Carolyn C. Wheat
Arabi, Louisiana

Ed. note: You have a point, but you overlook the fact that people often switch careers or get divorced. Furthermore, there's Medicare to consider. All in all, earning Social Security coverage—even if your benefit won't be as large as before the law changed—can't hurt.

Small Pensions

I have just perused the letters in the October *NEA Today*, and I am not at all surprised to find the cry for higher salaries the big issue.

What surprises me is the lack of thought given to the older teachers who worked hard and long to get salaries where they are today. We went without many, many conveniences that you take for granted. We are grateful that so much progress has been made.

Have you ever thought that behind all this progress are the older retired teachers barely existing on the small pensions they receive? Have you ever considered that if a raise in your salary is necessary, so is a raise in the pensions of those who struggled and worked for years before you?

Anna L. LaBree
Port Charlotte, Florida

Thank You!

I would like to use this forum to thank the NEA member who read about my love of Thoreau ("People," Sept.) and sent me, anonymously, a very valuable first edition of Thoreau's *Cape Cod*. This teacher simply listed her initials after a nice note about how she had come across the volumes in her home and knew that I would appreciate them, and thanked me for what I was doing in the classroom.

Thank you, unknown colleague, for your generous, unselfish, encouraging gesture.

David Barto
Levittown, Pennsylvania

Leadership on AIDS

Congratulations to NEA for its pilot projects on community AIDS education ("AIDS and Community Education," Sept.), and best wishes to the three pilot locals for successful programs that can soon be replicated throughout our nation.

Having recently completed an intensive three-day training to qualify as a volunteer to help persons with AIDS, I was extremely fortunate to receive detailed factual data on all aspects of the disease. The AIDS factbook inserted in the September *NEA Today* provides much of the same valuable information. I applaud the NEA for mailing this clearly written, comprehensive yet concise factbook to its membership. I am proud of the NEA for once again showing responsible leadership.

Irvin K. Sasaki
Honolulu, Hawaii

Attention, Candidates For NEA Office

Delegates to the 1988 NEA Representative Assembly (July 4-7 in New Orleans) will elect the Association's secretary-treasurer and two Executive Committee members. The secretary-treasurer will serve a two-year term, and Executive Committee members will serve three-year terms, all beginning Sept. 1, 1988.

Candidates must have been NEA Active or Educational Support members for two years immediately preceding the election. The May-June issue of *NEA Today* will carry the photo and candidate statement of anyone filing for office and submitting a statement by April 1. Submission of these forms does not constitute nomination for office.

The Representative Assembly may also need to elect at-large NEA directors representing ethnic minorities, administrators, classroom teachers in higher education, and Educational Support members pursuant to Article V, Section 1 (c), (d), (e), and (f) of the NEA Constitution. If such at-large Board of Directors elections become necessary, the presidents and executive directors of all state affiliates, as well as NEA directors, Executive Committee members, and the NEA Committee on Minority Affairs, will be notified in June.

More information about election and campaign procedures is available from the NEA Executive Office, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

Association Boycotts

For several years schools where I've taught have promoted the "Labels for Education" program run by the Campbell's soup company. At one point we discontinued collecting the labels due to a boycott of Campbell's products when the company was engaged in litigation with midwestern farmworkers.

Can you tell me whether or not this case was ever settled? We would like to know if we should ask parents to collect these labels.

Gail Hult
Amity, Oregon

Ed. note: The case was settled, and the Association no longer supports a boycott of Campbell's products.

NEA currently supports four boycotts: two called by the United Farm Workers (one against Red Coach Lettuce, the other against California table grapes) to protest unfair labor relations policies; one called by the Independent Federation of Flight Assistants to protest labor relations policies at Trans World Airlines; and one called by TransAfrica against Shell Oil products to protest activities by Shell's international parent company that help prop up apartheid in South Africa.

Address correspondence to "Letters," NEA Today, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. We reserve the right to edit letters for length.

Debate

Should public school students be required to wear uniforms?

Joe Di Dio

Joe Di Dio

YES

Pat Gunter has taught seventh and ninth grade English and literature at Hawthorne Junior High School in Pocatello, Idaho, for 18 years. A former negotiations chair, she's currently president of the Pocatello Education Association.

By requiring students to wear uniforms to school, we could avoid many problems.

Having taught junior high school for the past 18 years, I've had ample opportunity to observe the peculiarities of the teenage student. Although I view each child as unique in most respects, the majority of students this age have several characteristics in common.

First, teenage students are extremely peer oriented; they spend a lot of time trying to fit in with their peer group. Second, at this age both boys and girls are extremely sensitive, and feelings and emotions are very near the surface. Finally, the opinions of their peers mean more to them than their own opinions, and they tend to base their own self-worth on what others seem to think—particularly others of their own age group.

Peer identification is of such overriding importance to teenagers that in their pursuit of the "right" clothes they spend a great deal of time, energy, and money that could otherwise be put to better use.

Perhaps the argument most frequently used by opponents of school uniforms is that standardizing dress would eliminate a student's individuality. This is not a valid argument. In the first place, those who believe individualism comes from external factors are mistaken. Individualism begins with the person and is expressed in many different ways. For teenagers, individualism often gets lost in their desire to conform—in style of dress, hairdos, even behavior.

Any deviation from accepted standards is viewed as not fitting in. At the thought of not belonging, the delicate sensitivities and emotions come into play. Nothing is as devastating to an insecure teenager as the thought that he or she is not accepted by the peer group. And that acceptance is often based on dress.

Providing children with the latest fad in teenage clothing is a very expensive proposition. How many of us know parents who accompany their sons and daughters to the local mall and, within an hour or so, lay out several hundred dollars for teen clothing? And how many of us have heard parents lament the fact that the $100 Esprit sweater bought just a few months ago is now collecting dust at the bottom of the closet, because the fashions have changed again? This is especially true in communities that are extremely style-conscious, where styles can change almost weekly.

School uniforms generally are basic, inexpensive, easy to care for, and made from long-lasting materials. Also, the styles don't change often, so uniforms can be handed down to siblings.

For these reasons, I believe that public schools should require students to wear uniforms. Such a requirement would reduce the amount of energy and time spent trying to imitate their peers, leaving more of both for the pursuits for which our educational systems are designed.

Those children whose families are financially unable to "keep up with the Joneses" would fit in, and they would be able to establish relationships on a foundation more stable and long-lasting than appearance. Self-esteem—quite often a tenuous trait in young people—could be nurtured.

In one Baltimore, Md., public grade school, the switch to school uniforms this year has generally been well-received by teachers and students alike. The coordinator of the uniform program was quoted in one Associated Press story as saying, "Children can get destroyed with concern about clothes instead of education." And, she added, uniforms can make students feel better about themselves and instill pride.

On the whole, uniforms would add something positive to the school experience by eliminating a source of competitiveness and expense. And they would give our students a good start at establishing a more realistic value system.

NO

Reba Evans is a librarian and kindergarten teacher at Oakland Elementary School in Carroll County, Va. Before coming to Carroll County in 1972, she taught third grade and was a middle school librarian in North Carolina.

Students should not be required to wear uniforms to public school. The United States has a unique education system. We offer a free public education to everyone regardless of race, creed, religion, or economic standards. Being required to wear uniforms will take away from students' freedom of choice.

A major goal of education is to teach students to be independent thinkers so they can make decisions about the future of our country. Helping students develop critical thinking skills can do more to help our future leaders and citizens become independent thinkers than forcing everyone to dress alike.

Many people think dressing in uniform would improve discipline. Discipline, however, does not depend on how a student is dressed. Most schools have well-disciplined students now without uniforms. Students will be better disciplined when parents, teachers, and administrators work together, not when someone arbitrarily imposes a dress code. Students can be dressed in the best uniform available and a breakdown in discipline will occur if one of the three important elements—parents, teachers, and administrators—is not working with the others.

Requiring students to wear uniforms will lead to a whole new set of discipline problems and another section in the policy manual. When a uniform is required, discipline measures will be needed for students who don't wear their uniform or wear a dirty or torn uniform.

Often it seems teenagers try to dress alike. But if you look closely, you'll see there are differences in the way they dress even if they wear the same *type* of clothes. They're searching for their own identity. They want to be alike by wearing the same type of clothes, yet different by wearing clothes of different designs or colors. Think about one item of clothing that's almost a uniform for Americans: the blue jean. There are many designs of jeans and jeans-type clothes now, as well as a variety of shades of blue and other colors, allowing people to dress alike and still look different.

Who wants to wear the same type of clothes every day? Most of us like a little change in the style and color of our dress, even if it is blue jeans.

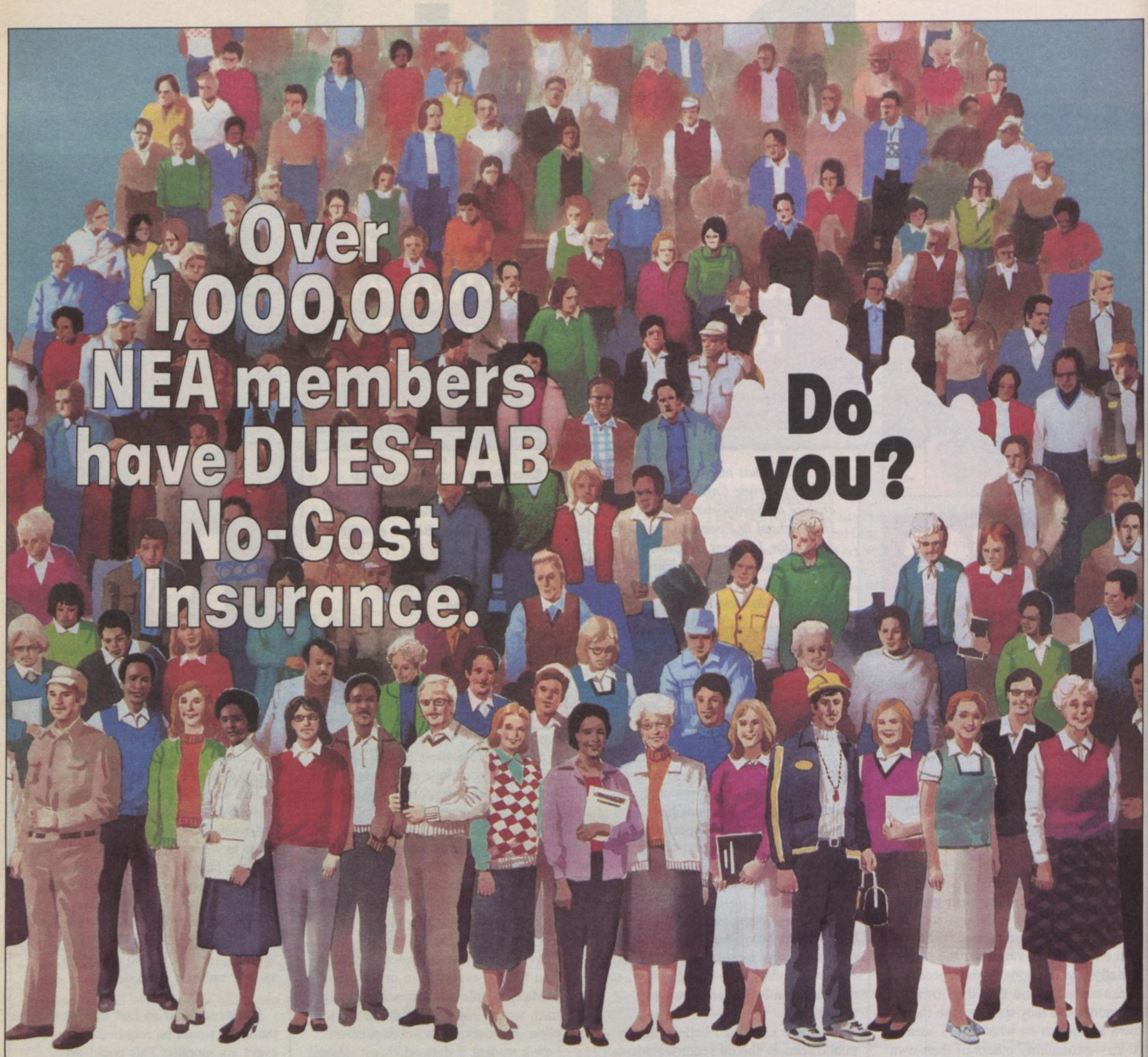
Any scout parent can tell you about uniforms. When a child joins the scouts and wants the uniform, he or she will agree to wear it to every meeting. As the year passes, it becomes more difficult to get that scout to wear the uniform once a week or even once a month. The uniform that fit well in the fall or was even a little large will, by spring, probably be too small, so another uniform is needed.

Children grow so fast that new uniforms would be required about every six months. This could get expensive. Any parent who has bought a uniform for scouts, gymnastics, ballet, cheerleading, or whatever has found that uniforms aren't as inexpensive as they're cracked up to be. Even if the uniform is a pair of jeans and a white shirt, it will become expensive because it will be an item in local demand. And retailers who corner the uniform market will probably boost prices.

If one only needed a single uniform, that might not be too bad. But there are five school days a week; therefore, in order to come to school clean, each child would need at least three uniforms. This would mean washing and ironing uniforms at least twice a week.

The seasons also dictate how we dress. A uniform that's suitable for cold-weather wear wouldn't be suitable for warm weather.

Requiring uniforms would not help us better educate our students. Discipline would not be improved. A whole new set of discipline problems would be developed. It would add expenses to an already stretched family budget. Requiring uniforms would not help us teach students to become the independent thinkers of tomorrow, and that's the major goal of education. □



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